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Can Communism Convert China?

by

O. M. GREEN

The S.E. Asian Mainland in 1950

by

Major-General J. R. HARTWELL

Suppression of Civil Liberty in India

by

K. P. GHOSH

Banking in the Indian Sub-Continent

by

L. DELGADO

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CONTENTS

EDITORIAL

	PAGE
The Philippines Peasant Army	4
Can Communism Convert China?	7
Suppression of Civil Liberties in India	9
The Tamil Language	11
The South-East Asian Mainland in 1950	12
The Interplay of Chinese Secret and Political Societies in Malaya (I)	14
	16
	19
	20
	22
	24
	25
	26
	27
	29
	30
	34
	36

FROM ALL QUARTERS

LONDON NOTEBOOK

Books on the Far East	20
Review of Reviews	22

The Literary Background of Pakistan

Atiquzzaman Khan	24
Kumar Devarajah (Colombo)	25
Herbert Chambers	26

ECONOMIC SECTION

Banking in the Indian Sub-Continent (I)	27
Pakistan Trade Unionis	29
Copra Production in the Far East	30
Economic Publications	34
ECONOMIC NOTES	36

EASTERN WORLD

THE TWO VIET NAMS

There has been no enthusiasm in London about the British and American recognition of Bao Dai's new State. The ratification by France of the treaties signed last year with the governments of Cambodia, Laos and Viet Nam, and the consequent status of these countries as "independent members of the French Union," has precipitated a situation which makes Indo-China the most explosive front line in the so-called "cold war". Communist China, followed by Russia, recognised Ho Chi Minh's regime as the rightful government of Viet Nam. Britain and the United States hail Emperor Bao Dai as the legal ruler of that country. In both cases recognition has been extended to a warring group, desperately fighting for an extension of its powers. Both sides have gained moral support which very soon will take the form of material assistance. In the case of Ho Chi Minh it may be expected that he will be able to draw supplies from across the Chinese frontier, while Bao Dai will no doubt benefit substantially as a potential buffer against Communism. Thus, Indo-China has gained an aspect similar to that of Korea, only that there the 38th parallel divides the actual control of the country, whereas no such line exists in Viet Nam. In Tongking, Bao Dai's French troops control about one-eighth of the territory, in Annam, where the Viet Minh rules the countryside including 250 miles of coastline, they hold a few towns and even in Cochinchina, where the situation is best, they control only three-quarters of the area. The fight is bound to go on and to grow in intensity, loss of life and cost. India has given a fair and sensible warning which has been ignored. Without even bothering to examine the possibilities of negotiations with Dr. Ho Chi Minh, the West has proved unable to conceive a policy superior to that of fighting Communism with arms and has decided to

help an artificial structure which commands neither territory nor public support. The only ray of hope is the possibility that the West has learned from America's disastrous failure of her policy in China. There is now more talk of trying to stop the Communist advance by raising the standard of living in S.E. Asia. The U.S. are reported to favour deliveries of farming equipment, medical supplies and consumer goods to the area, but it remains to be seen whether wise counsel will prevail or whether the mistakes in China will be repeated all over again, this time to the detriment of the whole of South East Asia.

MONOPOLIES IN JAPAN

When Lt.-Col. W. R. Hodgson, British Commonwealth member of the Allied Council for Japan alleged that eighty per cent of the industrial and economic life of Japan was controlled by eight Japanese banks, he was ruled out of order and solicited a very unsatisfactory reply from Allied Headquarters. Based on the findings of the Deconcentration Review Board — a group of specialists of breaking up the large monopolies who made an analysis of the problem who formerly controlled Japan's economic and financial life—S.C.A.P. found it expedient to silence Lt.-Col. Hodgson. The reply he received can hardly satisfy even the most naive, for although the Board found that the eight largest banks controlled slightly less than 50 per cent of Japan's banking business, its investigations are two years old, and the situation has changed since then considerably. This can be seen from the example of the Zaibatsu concerns which, after the war, were broken up into individual components operating as independent organisations. It is now generally known that they are beginning to make under-cover agreements among themselves and, in some cases, to amalgamate. This situation is bound to lead ultimately to the establishment of monopolies, in fact if not in name, which is completely at variance with Allied policy. It is most unlikely that these concerns will confine themselves exclusively to trade and commerce; it seems inevitable that they will control banking as well in the not so far future. The

economic and political consequences for the rest of the world will be of great importance, and it is high time that the Commonwealth which, after all is supposed to "share the responsibilities" concerning Japan's future, should take a greater interest in what is happening in Japan and support its lonely spokesman at the Allied Council there.

PEACE IN BURMA?

It is difficult to understand the motives and tactics of the present Burmese Government regarding the relationship between their country and Britain. The chaotic conditions inside Burma need not be enlarged upon, but it is hard to see the logic behind the Burmese Government's actions particularly with regard to foreign-owned industries. There seems to be a fixed idea in the minds of many of their official spokesmen that Britain is behind the Karen rebellion. This, quite apart from being utterly untrue, is an astonishing method of obtaining Commonwealth aid which Burma greatly needs. Although loudly declaring the desirability of attracting foreign capital, the Burmese Government does little to stop the campaign of abuse against foreign industrialists, and the scale of compensation for nationalised concerns and the threat of future nationalisation does not offer any inducement to would-be investors. That, in spite of this situation, some modest loans are being granted to Burma, only shows the friendliness which the Commonwealth countries harbour for her, and the realisation of her key position in S.E. Asia's food and strategic problems. Although Premier Thakin Nu, speaking at the half-yearly meeting of the "Peace-Within-One-Year Committee," declared his confidence that peace would be achieved by the target date, July 19th, the British Government, it appears, does not share his optimism, as shown by their recent withdrawals of guarantees against future losses by the Burmah Oil Company.

Believing in the freedom of the press, this journal represents a forum where articles containing many different, and often controversial, opinions are being published. They do not necessarily express the views or policy of the paper.

THE PHILIPPINES PEASANT ARMY

bp Ralph Richardson

RECENT reports from the Philippines indicate that the spirit of the Hukbalahap, the peasant army carrying on an armed struggle against the government, has been fired by two current events, one international and the other domestic.

The success of the Communists in China and the irregularities of the national election in the Philippines have raised Huk hopes as well as giving them greater prestige and adding new recruits to their ranks.

China has not only been a psychological uplift to the Huks but the application of Marxism to Asiatic agrarian conditions worked out by Mao Tse-tung—the top leadership of the Huks is mostly Communist—provided them with a guidebook of valuable lessons, now keenly studied.

At this stage it seems fitting to point out that alleged "Moscow control" over the Huks is entirely unfounded. Until a short time ago whatever foreign influence existed in the ranks of the Philippine Communist Party was almost all American.

That the elections in the Philippines would not have been looked upon with favour by the Honest Ballot Association is now a fact which even conservative periodicals have acknowledged. The immediate result has been the election of Quirino but his victory may turn out to be a pyrrhic one. Thousands of anti-Communists who were shocked by the unsavoury manipulations are agreeing that Luis Taruc, Huk commander-in-chief and Mariano P. Balgos, General Secretary of the Communist Party, were right in declaring before the elections that there would be wholesale cheating at the polls, mass denial of the vote, intimidation and fraud.

Almost a year before the election Taruc had warned: "We are faced by the fact that a clean government cannot be achieved by parliamentary action."

The decision of the Huks and the Communist Party to give "reluctant and qualified" support to Laurel was attacked on the basis of Laurel's record as puppet president under the Japanese and defended on the grounds that those voting for Laurel would be the "workers, peasants and anti-imperialist forces."

It is now obvious that a sizeable fraction of the Laurelites, especially in the cities—Laurel polled 40 per cent of the vote in Manila—are now more inclined to co-operate with the Communist-led forces than hitherto. A loose-knit "anti-Quirino" coalition, extending from the urban middle-class to the poorest of agrarian folk is already being formed. In this broad grouping the Communist Party and its allies in the cities and the Huks in the countryside are assuming leading positions.

The attacks on government civil and military personnel in the wake of the election were committed chiefly by

hastily formed sects of Laurel supporters. Some of these armed bands are now fighting side by side with the Huks.

Organised on May 29th, 1942, as the "People's Anti-Japanese Army," the Huks suspended activities shortly after V-J Day. They reconstituted their ranks when it seemed apparent to them that the *status quo* was returning. On June 25th, 1946, they again raised the banner of the Hukbalahap, this time calling themselves the "National Liberation Army," and emerged in the field as the fighting arms of the Pambansang Kaishang Manggagawa (P.K.M.) or National Peasants' Union. The P.K.M.'s membership is easily ten times that of the Hukbalahap but the Huks are the "leadership" force, occupying the same position as the Chinese Red Army to the civilian mass organisations which gave it full support.

In uniting the land-hungry peasants of central Luzon against the returning *caciques* the Huks found ready support. When the *caciques* had fled from the Japanese advance it was their tenants who tilled the soil, and the peasants felt entitled to some of the earth they had tended during the harsh war years. A. H. Lacson, one of Manila's best-known journalists, sized up the issue concisely when he wrote: "The disturbances that now rock the central plains are nothing more than a phase of the struggle of the dispossessed for possession, for the chance at life that is more than animal living, for land that by right of work is theirs."

The plight of the Philippine peasant is so well known as not to need repeating. Suffice it to sum up his condition in the words of Amado Hernandez, formerly Poet Laureate of the islands and now a city councillor of Manila: "The peasant, traditionally a share cropper, is compelled to live a more miserable existence than even the underpaid city worker. Like his work animal, the Carabao, he is hog-tied to hard labour, debt and want. He and his whole family are perpetual slaves to the absentee *cacique*."

In considering the possibilities of Huk success it is worth taking into account the fertile ground they seek to cultivate. Eighty per cent of the population of the Philippines are peasants. For decades the issue of absentee ownership—some of the richest land holdings belong to foreign and urban interests—has fermented discontent, riots, rebellions and bloodshed.

As the Huks grew in their initial territories, Pampanga and Nueva Ecija provinces, they expanded to other parts of Luzon and to other islands. And as they branched out they found allies. The government justifiably laments that the "eradication" of the Hukbalahap is made difficult by the shielding of Huks by individuals and organisations in areas where no active Huk unit operates.

Early in their post-war career the Huks realised the

danger of being isolated as an insurgent peasant organisation and through the Communist Party and left-wing friends developed close ties with urban labour and middle-class groups. Directly or indirectly, the Huks took their place as part of an "anti-imperialist" united front—albeit flexible and uneven—consisting of such diverse elements as the Congress of Labour Organisations (C.L.O.), Democratic Alliance, Philippine United Peasant and Labour Organisations (P.U.P.L.O.), Federacion Obrera De Filipinas (F.O.F.), National Textile Workers' Union (N.D.C.), Public Utilities Employees' Association (M.E.R.A.L.C.O.) and a section of the Nacionalista Party.

Failure of the Roxas administration to alleviate the agrarian situation as well as to liquidate urban unemployment, relieve the acute rice shortage, guarantee civil rights and satisfactorily meet similar demands sharpened the appetite and broadened the perspective of the leftist forces. The concentration on achieving reform measures gave way to a new aim: the overthrow of the government by force. In January, 1948, Taruc declared that the Philippines would go the way of China.

When Elpidio Quirino succeeded Manuel Roxas to the presidency of the Philippines, following the latter's death while in office, he projected an "amnesty programme" which, after thorough discussion by the leadership of the Huks, P.K.M. and the central committee of the Communist Party, was accepted by Taruc.

Taruc qualified his agreement with a statement of intentions. If the amnesty failed and "a really democratic state" was not achieved by peaceful constitutional means, he declared, "revolution (would be) the only remaining alternative."

He called for a "quick, radical adoption of social and economic reforms," outlining three immediate steps which had to be taken. One was in the field of civil rights, one dealt with "democratic industrialisation" and the third centred around the land question.

On the latter issue Taruc's proposals were not a whit more radical than those advanced by Quirino's own Commissioner of Social Welfare, Asuncion A. Perez.

Mrs. Perez, who proved herself unique among public officials by making a first-hand report of peasant conditions, studying areas which the wide-eyed press reported as "unvisited by any government agency except the constabulary," recommended the following: Industrialisation of the rural areas, expropriation of landed estates over 200 hectares for re-sale to tenants, humanisation of the methods of the various instrumentalities of law enforcement, benefits to former guerillas and a long-range education programme.

Neither her suggestions nor Taruc's demands were carried out but the collapse of the amnesty, in August, 1948, was due to another and more immediate factor. The Huks insisted upon an "armed truce" while the government urged the peasants to surrender their arms. Neither side prevailed and fighting was renewed. This time, as expected, it spread beyond its previous limits, lighting conflagrations in South Luzon, Iloilo, Bicol, the Visayas, Mindanao, Leyte and other areas.

In a message sent to a rally held on February 24th,

1949, to commemorate the death of Manuel Joven, the trade union leader murdered by "persons unknown," Taruc made the issue clear. He boldly declared:

"Those who are in power in our country are hastening the day when a people's justice will rule for Filipinos too." (The reference was to China.) "Today we are not faced merely by an issue of graft and corruption. We are faced by the fact that a clean government cannot be achieved by parliamentary action. This truth is being accepted by an ever-growing section of the Filipino people, who are realising that it is necessary to take up arms in order to win their demands, to conduct an armed struggle for freedom, democracy and a decent way of life. In this they are guided by the main spirit of our history as a people, the revolutionary spirit that led the people to fight the tyranny and corruption of Spain and Japan, and which is the only recourse when all other means to gain their demands have failed. They appear to have failed today. Let now the lessons of our history begin to assert themselves."

On March 12th, 1949, in a lecture at Manila's Town Hall, the General Secretary of the Communist Party, Mariano P. Burgos, declared: "The days of the puppets of imperialism are numbered."

Two weeks later, in a letter to the *Manila Times* assailing Quirino's proposed "Pacific Pact," Taruc wrote:—

"The imperialists and the traitors will be destroyed by the patriotic action of the people. And the Hukbalahap, loyal to the people's interests, will be in the forefront of that struggle."

Similar utterances have been made by Huk, P.K.M. and other left-wing leaders.

That the revolutionary forces consider themselves engaged neither in suicidal action nor in tilting at windmills can be demonstrated by the pre-election analyses made by the Communist Party. A sample quotation will underline their outlook and determination.

"In their desperate reliance on U.S. financial aid and military protection, the puppet administration will eventually yield to all demands of the imperialists. Thus, our country is faced with the prospects of more ruthless suppression, the like of which not even the worst under the Japanese occupation can approach. It is this policy which will stiffen the resistance of the the Filipino democratic and nationalist elements, who hitherto have still been confused by imperialist propaganda. This resistance will naturally invite further suppression, and thus facilitate the rallying of greater masses around the armed struggle. The favourable international developments will also strengthen the wavering anti-imperialist elements, who are just waiting for such developments to take a more active role in the anti-imperialist struggle."

According to the Communist Party there are three groups, organised according to class alignments, who are making a bid for power. These are: the feudal landlord-comprador combination, backed by imperialists; nationalist bourgeoisie, both big and petty; and the peasant-worker combination.

The first (according to the C.P.) holds sway over the Liberal Party, of which Quirino is a member; the second group rules the Nacionalista Party, whose candidate was Laurel; and the last named dominates the organised peasant and trade union movements, the leadership of the Communist Party and has some influence over "wavering anti-

imperialist groups." All three groups are carrying on an intensive contest for the support of the unorganised peasants and workers and the petty bourgeoisie masses.

The "peasant-worker combination" describes precisely the revolutionary force which was begun with the reorganisation of the Huks and later developed a "worker reserve," composed of militant trade unionists in urban centres.

The biggest development in the Huk programme is the establishment of a permanent base of operations, such as the Chinese Communists organised following their "Long March." Hitherto the Huks have carried on as a transient group of small units, their central headquarters being wherever Taruc and his staff camped for the night.

In a yet undisclosed "mountain fortress" in Central Luzon, the Huks and the P.K.M. have founded the first settlement of their proposed "People's Democracy." Hundreds of families have been given land and a plan for intensive cultivation of the soil put into effect. The Huks hope to be able to supply some of their food and clothing needs from the output of this area.

The Huk base was carefully selected. Its terrain is such as to be a shield against strafing and bombing, an intricate air-raid warning system giving the peasants ample time to reach the safety of the nearby caves. The few passes and steep slopes can easily be defended against large bodies of assaulting troops. Even a long siege will not force its downfall as the Huks feel sure they can feed the people from the land and accumulated stocks as well as slip through the encirclement for any necessities they might need.

This Huk "anchor" does not mean the peasant units have retreated to defence positions. Far from it. The very existence of a community which they can call their own has strengthened their determination. Today vigorous and bitter fighting goes on in the Candaba swamps, the Cagayan Valley, Mindoro, the Sierra Madre hills of Nueva Ecija and in Tayabas, Lagunas and Batangas.

What kind of weapons do the Huks possess? How disciplined are their forces and how do they operate? These are three questions frequently asked by people in the United States who are limited to a mere acquaintance of what is going on in the rice paddies, plains and mountains of the war-torn Philippines.

The Huks have every type of infantry weapon carried by the constabulary forces. Constabulary soldiers deserting to the Huks often take their equipment with them and the Huks make constant raids upon armouries, police stations, encampments, etc., as well as ambushing constabulary units.

Every Huk squadron is equipped with at least one machine gun, two sub-machine guns, hand grenades, rifles and pistols. The Huks have a network of motor pools, consisting of trucks, jeeps, command cars and motor-cycles. They possess tanks, flame-throwers and light cannon. Schools on the use and maintenance of military equipment are in constant operation.

Contrary to some reports, the discipline of the Huks is of a high order, probably on a level with that of the Chinese Red Army. Any soldier accused of plunder, rape,

violence or pollution is instantly court-martialled—and the sentences are severe ranging up to and including the death penalty.

When the Huks seize a town they put up posters proclaiming their slogans and then call the townspeople to a meeting, usually held in the market place or in front of a public building. No one is forced to attend. Questions are invited and the audience is urged to express its grievances. After explaining their programme the Huks seek to organise "resistance cells" and gain recruits. Occasionally contributions are requested, each family asked to donate one peso. By this time the constabulary, which someone has notified, is in hot pursuit. Word is passed up to the Huks by their chain of outpost scouts and they retreat to the security of pre-designated hideouts.

Leaflets are the favourite form of Huk propaganda. They are printed—or handwritten!—in English, Tagalog and the dialect of the area of distribution, and then circulated by hundreds. Excerpts from a typical leaflet read:—

"UNITE UNDER THE DEMOCRATIC MOVEMENT . . .

"Very soon there will take place in our country a national movement which will overthrow the power of American imperialists, their Wealthy Puppets and the Feudal Landlords, who are the root cause of our poverty, oppression and humiliation."

Leaflets addressed to the Constabulary ask:—

"Why do you endure to stay and live under the influence of those who exploit, oppress and humiliate you? Of those who cause your poverty and insecurity? Why is it that you preferred to fight against us, we, your brothers—the H.U.K.S. and P.K.M.s? Is it because we fight for the liberation of our country from American domination and save all oppressed classes . . . especially those working, from exploitation and poverty, that is why you fight us?"

"The people of the whole world are now rising to overthrow their oppressors and exploiters. The same thing is now happening in our country. This is the time for all of us to unite and rise against those Imperialist, Feudal Compradors and their wealthy puppets—who have tortured our lives for hundreds of years. . . . If you want to win let us unite. . . . Our unity shall insure our Victory. . . . Don't fight for Slavery—Fight for Liberty

"WORKERS SHOULD NOT FIGHT WORKERS. WHEN WORKERS FIGHT AGAINST WORKERS OUR ENEMIES WIN.

"WHEN WORKERS UNITE AND STRUGGLE OUR ENEMIES FALL."

Numerous estimates have been made as to the strength of the Huks and the P.K.M. It is the writer's opinion, after careful consideration of all evidence, that the Huks number 20,000 active fighting men with about 25,000 reserves ready to take the field at an hour's notice. The P.K.M. has about 300,000 members and nearly half a million sympathisers. Urban support—trades unions, small business, students, professionals, etc.—is over the quarter million mark.

Whatever the result, 1950 is sure to see an intensified campaign on the part of the revolutionaries as well as by the government. The challenge to the Quirino regime has not yet reached the critical stage but unless the Huks are smashed in the field or a full-scale programme of far-reaching social reforms is launched, neither of which appears likely, the end of the year may see the U.S. Pacific Periphery Defence Zone menaced by the flames of revolt.

However, what Washington will see fit to do in such a situation is beyond the province of this article.

CAN COMMUNISM CONVERT CHINA?

By O. M. Green

FOR 2,100 years before the Revolution in 1911 China lived by exactly the same political and social principles, the growth of which can, in fact, be clearly traced for at least 1,500 years earlier to the time of the Shang dynasty. Only once, during the reign of Shih Hwang Ti, the so-called Napoleon of China, was any serious attempt made to substitute a different system. But on Shih's death in 210 B.C. China instantly reverted, under the Han Emperors, to her own established preferences. Since then dynasties have risen and fallen, the surface of life has been violently disturbed, but the fundamentals both for State and individual were unaffected.

Such is the embattled mass of conservatism of 430 million people, which the Communists have set themselves to convert to a creed as alien at every point to the inherited tastes of China as it could well be. They admit that it is a hard task. But their organisation is perfect. Every member of the Communist Party (at present believed to be limited to 3,000,000) is carefully picked and must be guaranteed by two sponsors before being admitted to membership. And their zeal appears to know no bounds. They are entirely ruthless; the individual counts for nothing compared with the State.

In this particular Communism at once conflicts (as Shih Hwang Ti's totalitarian state conflicted) with the most important principle of Chinese politics, namely, that it is the State which owes duty to the individual and not *vice versa*. In practice that principle was often violated, but it was always there, accepted by even the least praiseworthy emperors.

Two other points of conflict are to be noted. Communism centres all authority in a small omnipotent State Council, whose powers, as shown in the Common Programme, reach down to the smallest local governing council. But government in China never was centralised, despite the semi-divine authority of the Son of Heaven. So long as the Viceroy kept order and remitted the required revenue to the Throne, each one was independent in his own viceroyalty, imposing his own taxation, maintaining his own army and with absolute powers of life and death. Not the least of the causes of the Kuomintang's downfall was their attempt to centralise all government in themselves.

Lastly, there is the Chinese reverence for the family and the worship of ancestors, which is the strongest influence in the Chinese character. It is hardly necessary to say how this must conflict with Communism.

Long before the Communists had captured Peking, or even Manchuria, their political work was watched by trustworthy witnesses over large stretches of North China. As each new village was taken by the Red Army political agents followed up to institute Marxist councils which all the villagers were obliged to attend once a week. "At last," the Communist propaganda exulted, "the Chinese

people are enabled to govern themselves." Nothing could be farther from the truth. For centuries the villagers had indeed governed themselves, through councils of their elders, who took cognizance of the needs of all.* In the new councils, which are accompanied by long lectures on Marxism, the peasants find that they have to vote according to dictation. They resented this and they were bored by having to attend so many meetings. But they soon found that it was not safe to stay away.

Such councils are not practicable in the big towns and there has not yet been time to set up local councils as provided for in the Common Programme. But intense "indoctrination" was at once begun in every organisation taken over, the workers in which have to attend daily classes in Marxism. In the centres of the public utilities in Shanghai where troops were put on guard for some months, it was noticed that all the soldiers were made to attend these classes every day: political instruction for the Army is inscribed in the Common Programme.

As part of the general training, a congress of artists, musicians and writers, altogether 613 people, was called in Peking last July, among them, one notes, being the famous actor Mei Lan-fang, the most brilliant interpreter of classic Chinese drama of modern times. One is quite safe in believing that he was not there because he wanted to be. Resolutions were passed pledging all present to "strive resolutely for the thorough elimination of all remnant reactionary forces," and an All-China Federation of Artists and Writers was formed, the aim of which is "to unite all patriotic democratic workers in the arts for the complete overthrow of imperialism, feudalism and bureaucratic capitalism and their artistic influences and the building up of a people's art of the New Democracy and the people's republic of China."

A similar federation of journalists has also been formed, and of course the cinema has been purged of all "imperialist" American films, and pictures of Lenin's life and the Chinese people's revolutionary struggle displayed for the regalement of the dwindling audiences.

But the greatest of all the Communists' efforts to convert China are those exerted in the schools under the direction of the Higher Education Committee in Peking. Even yet this work is not in full swing: Communist publications announce a special educational drive planned for 1951. But already the general purpose is clear. We may imagine that the Communists have decided that not much is to be done with adults. They can be told what to do and kept in order by fear, but their private thoughts are beyond reach. Every Chinese has a charming knack of appearing to listen to you with pleased interest when in fact he is not listening at all and is probably thinking of something totally

* For example, a whole village was assessed for a certain amount of taxation: the elders decided how much each household paid according to its resources.

different. To get hold of the fresh minds of children, above all to break down their reverence for parents and family, thus alone can China be forced into the Communist mould. In one of the elementary school books children are taught to repeat: "I do not love Mamma, I do not love Papa, I only love Mao Tze-tung." As they grow up they are encouraged in every way to defy their parents and, like the Young Communists of Russia, to recognise only one duty in life, to the State.

Some years must pass before the success of these efforts can be gauged. Similar attempts in the past have failed. Shih Hwang Ti was supported by the powerful school of the Legalists in trying to destroy the old order: he slaughtered the Confucianists and burnt their books, but in vain. The Kuomintang in 1929 made a dead set at Confucius, banning his books in schools, closing his temples and striking his birthday out of the list of annual festivals. But even in the provinces which the K.M.T. best controlled they failed and the revival of Confucianism was one of the most remarkable features of the two or three years before the Japanese invasion.

Another factor is to be noticed. Land-locked Russia is easily shut off from the world. The bulk of her people may not be Communists, almost certainly are not. But they can easily be walled up against all outside influences. China with her 1,800 miles seaboard (much longer than that, when all the indentations of her coast are reckoned up) is in a very different position, while her people are accustomed to think for themselves as the Russians never have.

That, of course, is one of the strongest arguments for recognising the Communists, namely, that the world at large may still keep in touch with the Chinese people themselves and keep alive among them other influences than Communism-Leninism. But the Communists must be well aware of this and prepared to guard against it. That is why the prospects of Christian missionary societies in China must be viewed dubiously. At present the Communists are not interfering with mission hospitals or big colleges that teach science, medicine, etc., which the Communists need, although all the students have to undergo daily training in Marxism. But pastoral missionaries are clearly not favoured. The actual persecution prevalent in North China in 1948 has died down. But missionaries are strictly confined to their stations, they may not walk about the country evangelising as they used to do. One or two doctors have been admitted in recent months but attempts to send in ministers of religion have so far failed. It is difficult to see how it can be otherwise. Christianity with its supreme stress on independence of thought and the importance of the individual soul is something which Communism, if only for self-preservation, cannot tolerate.

As for trade, through which contact with the Chinese people is hoped for, the increasing monopoly of business by State bureaux shows clearly the Communists' design to eliminate all foreign merchants from China.

In the long run the salvation of the Chinese depends upon themselves. It is quite true that they are docile people and have acquiesced readily in the Communist triumph.

But that has always been their way, with whatever new rulers imposed themselves; and always they have rebelled when the new men proved unsatisfactory. Espionage and terrorism can hold them down for a while: these are rife everywhere, so that a man hardly dares speak freely to a friend lest he should be a Communist spy. But both these are old and familiar weapons in China, which have not averted innumerable rebellions.

Much must depend on whether the Communists can restore prosperity. The first fruits of their regime are not too promising. Exactions of grain and taxation are known to be much higher than under the Kuomintang and though the Communists pay for what they buy they fix their own prices. Peasant risings have occurred in the Yangtze Valley, which by the admission of Communist papers gave considerable trouble. Such troubles may no doubt pass. But China has been driven to such depths of economic distress by foreign invasion and civil war that the Communists have a far harder task in lifting her up than the Russian Bolsheviks had in 1917. So it might be that the popular misery on which the Communists rode to victory might prove their own undoing.

More than that one would not say, for fear of being accused of wishful thinking. Communism is such a new and terrible force, and the Chinese Communists have been so short a time in power, that the outcome is still mere speculation. But students of China will readily think of twenty different ways in which the clouds of today may yet "their currents turn awry." And China is very big.

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SUPPRESSION OF CIVIL LIBERTY IN INDIA

By K. P. Ghosh

THE Constitution of the sovereign, democratic Republic of India, formally proclaimed on January 26th, 1950, guarantees to its citizens full democratic rights. India's political leaders and nationalist press have hailed this Constitution, the bulkiest and most detailed in the world, as a ninth wonder. So it may be pertinent to look into some of the facts in order to discover how far the actual substance of democracy is operating in India today, particularly with regard to the rights and liberties of the individual.

Civil liberties have long been regarded in Western thought as the most precious of the attributes of democracy, certainly to be placed before the economic security offered in what are known as the people's democracies. India is a "full-blooded democracy," according to Pandit Nehru, her Prime Minister. And since, for the mass of the people, social inequity and a poverty that defies description make up the other face of India, it is to be assumed that the "full-bloodedness" refers to political democracy. India would go to any lengths to protect such democracy, says Nehru:

"We are neither blind to reality nor do we propose to acquiesce in any challenge to man's freedom, from whatever quarter it may come. Where freedom is endangered, or justice threatened, or where aggression takes place, we cannot be and shall not be neutral."

Though India has repeatedly refused to identify herself with either the power blocs in these days of cold war, it is significant that Indian leaders are full of praise for the democracy of the West, especially America, while Nehru castigates the Soviet Union as

"an extreme example of a growing tendency towards centralisation and regimentation, which are a danger to individual liberty."

Thus guaranteed by the Constitution and further affirmed by the heads of the state, India should abound in the freedom of man, justice, individual liberty, and other such desirable abstractions. Let us now enquire how far they can be reconciled with the existing facts.

The Indian nation is very old, while the Republic is still in its infancy. This should be kept in mind in considering the freedom of the individual in India, the qualifications of her law-givers, and the machinery that operates her laws. If things today were as in ancient Rome, Pandit Nehru, Sardar Patel, Maulana Azad, could all be voted kings or gods. Their popularity with the Indian people is still overwhelmingly great. Nevertheless, the fact remains that they are not the elected representatives of the people.

As recognised leaders of the Indian National Congress Party, they came to govern the country in September, 1946, by arrangement with the then Viceroy of India, Field-Marshal Lord Wavell, and have remained at the helm ever since. India has suffered partition, in August, 1947, became a Dominion, and is now a sovereign Republic within the Commonwealth, but her people have not yet had an opportunity of exercising their prerogative in the choice of their rulers.

The Constituent Assembly, now renamed the Indian Parliament, is not an elected body. Its members were nominated or selected by the provincial legislatures, themselves elected many years ago on a very limited franchise. A large number were nominated by the feudal princes whose political ascendancy has since been abolished.

The rulers and law makers of the country thus claim to represent the people on assumptions of their own, without confirmation at the polls, and under laws and practices conceived by, and inherited from, an alien bureaucracy in London. They rule through an administration and a police system which have never known what it is to bow to the will of the people.

There is, further, the historical background of Indian society, riddled through and through with social and economic distinctions dividing man from man. In the new Republic, therefore, those who form no part of the ruling sections have, apart from their consciousness of being citizens of a politically independent state, no feeling of benefit. Thus, the basic canon of civil liberty, the individual citizen's participation in the government of his country, is still a myth in India. His first chance so to participate will not come until a general election is held under the new Constitution, perhaps in 1951.

In this situation, thinking minds are troubled and uneasy, and active spirits restless. The administration, which appears to fear such spirits and has so far failed to give them any hope of satisfaction, resorts to mass arrests, imprisonment without trial, suppression of the Press, of freedom of speech, association and assembly—in a word, has thrown to the winds all civil liberties as understood in the democratic world, except the right to religious worship and to property.

For example, at a Press conference in London only last November, Pandit Nehru admitted that there are some three or four thousand prisoners detained without trial. No precise official figures are available.

Indian Communists, on the other hand, claim there are some twenty-five thousand political prisoners held without trial, most of them undoubtedly Communists, though non-Communist trade unionists and even anti-Communist Socialists are also being held.

From the constitutional point of view, there can be no justification in peace time for the imprisonment without trial of even a single man or woman.

Besides detention in prison, suspected persons may have their movements restricted within certain districts fixed by the police, or within their own homes (the "house arrest" made notorious by the Nazis and British imperial governments alike). The radius of movement and the time limit for the restriction are also arbitrarily fixed by the police, without the means of redress in a court of law.

Further, there have been reports of physical violence, such as lathi charges and firing on peaceful demonstrations, as well as maltreatment of prisoners and detenus resulting in some cases in severe injuries and even death.

A suspected person may be directed not to hold meetings at his home or to participate in any public meetings, demonstrations or processions. He may be forbidden to disseminate news or propagate his opinions in speech or writing with "any person who is known or *believed to be* a member of an unlawful association" (my italics).

The Indian Press has a past of which it may well be proud. Indian and British owned papers alike have fought fearless battles against authority for freedom of expression. Now that India is free and all the papers, with one exception, are Indian owned, there appears to be very little serious criticism of the Government. It would, of course, be absurd to claim that no newspaper holds any critical views. The Press everywhere has a vested interest in the freedom of expression, and in so far as it accepts public responsibility, it is bound to defend civil liberties, even in direct opposition to those in power.

But such criticism as does exist is, on the whole, mealy-mouthed and in no proportion to the actual infringements of civil rights. The few cases in which criticism has been outspoken are therefore startling, and it has been easy to label them "yellow journalism."

Whenever the Government requires from a newspaper (as it does in India today) a deposit of money as a security for good behaviour, to be forfeited at the Government's discretion; whenever it requires the submission of all Press material to the Censor's office before publication; whenever it reserves to itself the power to suspend a newspaper at will, and the paper has no redress in law—whenever any of these things happen, the freedom of the Press, accepted as a fundamental of civil liberty, is violated.

Scores of journals, faced with censorship orders, have ceased publication. Hardly a week passes without fresh news of the suppression of a journal or the proscription of books and pamphlets.

Another method of "getting at" the Press is through Government advertisements, which are frequently placed with newspapers, not in consideration of their circulation figures, but of their attitude towards the Government. This policy of alternating sticks and carrots prevents responsible newspapers with large circulations from making any but the most circumspect of criticisms.

Since India has gained her independence and adopted a democratic form of government, High Court judges there have held that it has been practically impossible to place any construction on the Press laws which would not stifle a good deal of legitimate criticism.

This virtual suppression of the free expression of opinion through the Press not only abrogates the civil rights of the individual; it also prevents the development of opposition views, organisations, and parties, the absence of which is generally described as contrary to democratic practice, and indeed characteristic of totalitarianism.

The right of association and assembly, another basic civil liberty, has also been greatly restricted. Throughout India, public meetings, whether indoors or out, no matter by whom they are organised, are illegal unless permission to hold them has first been obtained from the local police or magistrate. The magistrate can stipulate who may speak and on what subject. But this in no way protects the

speaker from possible prosecution afterwards, on police reports, for statements deemed to constitute provocation.

The Communist Party is, of course, the worst hit, and in many parts of India, it is banned as illegal. In other parts it suffers a *de facto* ban by arrests, threats of arrest of its leaders, and suppression of its Press and other activities. But other organisations, such as the All-India Trade Union Congress, the Progressive Writers' Union, the peasant movements, women's organisations, and youth and students' organisations, have also suffered badly.

Whatever the extent, small or great, of the country's sympathy for any of these organisations, the cause of civil liberty can hardly be said to be furthered by such suppressions.

The Civil Liberties Union of India, formed under the leadership of retired High Court judges and other eminent jurists, is strongly critical of the administration for its failure to ensure personal liberty and the civil liberties. The Government of India is, of course, deeply wounded: what reply can a lame man give when he is called a cripple? And governments cannot even expect the same compassion.

If one regards this question of the civil liberties in isolation from the other problems that beset India today, one will not get the right answers. Indian leaders have fought long years for civil liberty when the country was under British rule, and the Constitution they have now framed for a free India postulates the fundamental rights of all citizens: freedom of speech and expression, freedom of peaceable assembly, freedom of association, freedom of movement throughout India, freedom to acquire, hold and dispose of property. Yet various public security acts, Press acts, and the like, make these fundamental rights unavailable to the people.

When hard fact comes into conflict with theories and principles, the latter always give way. Today, the Government's repressive measures are the unyielding fact. It is a reaction to the people's demands for the elementary human needs of food, clothing, shelter and employment—none of which the present Government is capable of meeting.

All history records that popular demands for civil liberties, and the governmental reply of repressive laws, have coincided with periods of deep economic unrest. Conversely, the civil liberties have flourished, generally speaking, in periods of economic progress. Historians have recorded that the negation of civil liberties operates first against the demands of the under-privileged for more goods than they are getting. It then extends to the intellectuals—the writers, artists, philosophers, journalists, teachers, jurists—all those who have any interest, material or intellectual, in the freedom of thought and expression.

All tyrannies, however, are doomed to meet with ignominious failure. The law givers of India have perhaps recognised this truth, and in their wisdom incorporated in the Constitution the principles of fundamental human rights which they knew could not be put into practice by the Government they represent. Unable to resolve this conflict between the ideal of greater liberty and the still strongly entrenched forces, economic, social and political, inherited by the Indian Republic, they have bowed to both, in the vain hope of appeasing both heaven and hell.

THE TAMIL LANGUAGE

by D. A. Thrower (Madras)

ACCORDING to the Constitution of the Republic of India, Hindi is to replace English as the official language of that country fifteen years hence. This, however, is not a question for today, but what is agitating the minds of many people in areas where Hindi is not generally known is the Government's vigorous campaign to make Hindi the national language of India. Many, particularly in the south (where the Dravidian languages are spoken by more than ninety per cent of the population) are apprehensive lest an effort should be made to oust their native tongues in favour of a so-called national language as foreign to them as English or any other European language. Hindi is now being compulsorily taught as the second language in secondary schools, and introduced into elementary schools from the fifth standard. On the other hand, it is only fair to add that the principle that the pupils' native tongue should constitute the medium of instruction and the first language in elementary schools has been conceded.

In view of these political movements and fears we will give a few facts concerning the linguistic heritage which has made the Tamils, among others, so conservative in their attitude towards the prospect of a national language for all India. Although, until recently, Tamil lacked the advantage of being carried in the lap of modern civilisation, it had an ancient culture of its own. Even today it is one of the greatest languages in the world, in its fulness and power of expression, resembling English and German more than any other living tongue. It is the oldest of the Dravidian group of languages and, unlike many of the vernaculars of India, it is not a daughter of Sanskrit. In fact, a competent scholar has been quoted as saying, "It is certain that Tamil could do without Sanskrit much better than English without Latin." This language is at the present time the mother tongue of 20,000,000 people living in that part of the Indian peninsula which lies to the south of Madras city. 2,500 years ago it probably prevailed over a much larger portion of the sub-continent, but later suffered an eclipse similar to that which befell Celtic in the British Isles. Just as the Roman and later invasions caused the ancient dialects of Britain to be driven into remote corners of Cornwall, Wales, Scotland and Ireland, so the Aryan (or Brahman) invasion of India resulted in Tamil being replaced by other languages in the central and northern parts of the peninsula, so that today it is confined to its present area in the south.

Evidence of the antiquity of Tamil abounds. It is probably older than Sanskrit, which great tongue has condescended to borrow certain words from its copious vocabulary. It is also a surprising fact that three present-day Tamil words are to be found in the Hebrew Old Testament. These are the names of the ivory, apes and peacocks conveyed to Palestine in Solomon's ships, which seems to imply that those old-time traders visited India or Ceylon and obtained with these novelties their Tamil names, *danta*, *kapi*, and *togai*, which thus found their way into the Hebrew Bible. Tamil is amazingly rich in ancient poetic literature, in this respect predominating over the other

members of the Dravidian group. The celebrated Agastya, known as the Father of Tamil, compiled a Tamil lexicon, a poetical work of some 12,000 stanzas, about the sixth or seventh century before Christ. Unfortunately, however, very little of his work is extant today. The Kural, which is considered to be the finest piece of Tamil poetry, was written in the early centuries of this era, its author (according to the prevailing opinion) being, not a Brahman but a Harijan priest named Thiruvalluvar. For the quantity, quality and variety of its ancient literature Tamil is possibly unique among Oriental languages. Before Anglo-Saxon had a written character Tamil was a polished language. Its name means "sweetness" and, although it is not as musical as Telugu, its many epics can well lay claim to the "linked sweetness" of great poetry. It may be worth mentioning that the vernacular of the masses differs considerably from the literary style, the former being sometimes known as Low Tamil and the latter as High Tamil.

It is only in modern times that Tamil has developed a prose form. Prior to that all works, including dictionaries, grammars and medical treatises, were produced in poetical style. If we embark on an outline of Tamil grammar this article will grow to an abnormal length. Suffice it to say that, in the main, the structure of the language resembles that of Latin rather than that of Sanskrit. Among its chief defects is the absence of the article. Nouns are declined in eight cases and verbs conjugated in six main groups with several variations. The language (in common with other Dravidian tongues, has a peculiarity which is otherwise almost unique, viz., two forms of the first person plural pronoun "we," one including the person or persons addressed and the other excluding the same. The correct use of each of these forms is extremely important, especially in public speaking.

The most up-to-date Tamil-English dictionary is a lexicon published by the University of Madras between the years 1924 and 1939. It deals with some 118,000 words in seven neatly printed volumes containing 4,367 pages, the introductions and preface alone running to 105 pages.

The orthography is complicated and difficult to learn, the alphabet containing about 250 consonant, vowel and vowel-consonant signs. Small children experience great difficulty in mastering these hieroglyphics. Owing to this a number of persons have advocated a reform of the Tamil script, and a few have made strenuous efforts to popularise Roman Tamil. Most educated Tamils, however, have stubbornly resisted all such movements, feeling that no reformed script could, within foreseeable time, make their beloved classics available to the reading public. Further, there are many sounds in Tamil which cannot be adequately represented by any system of transliteration in Roman characters. Indeed, the present-day trend is all against anything that savours of modernising or simplifying, even to the extent of suppressing the modern names of towns and reinstating their time-honoured predecessors.

THE S.E. ASIAN MAINLAND IN 1950

by Major General J. R. Hartwell

IN view of the rapidity with which the gloomiest predictions, from the Western democracies point of view, made by me in the last eighteen months have been fulfilled or surpassed in S.E. Asia, it may be of interest to summarise these developments and take a further look at the predictable future. As I believe the next few months will see still more rapid advance towards the complete communisation of S.E. Asia and the lands on the eastern, north eastern and northern borders of India which all appertain to the same overall Cominform plan, let us summarise the position in these areas as they stand today. I wish to point out, however, that my views are given solely in an attempt to appreciate Cominform Weltpolitik with special relation to their economic-strategic significance in these areas, and not as a protagonist for the Western democracies against Communism, or *vice versa*.

We see, then, that Russia, having encountered stiffer opposition than she perhaps counted on in Berlin, and Western Europe generally, and probably not too happy over Yugoslavia and conditions in other satellites, has, as predicted, turned her main, if still rather under-cover, attractions to the East, or it would perhaps at the moment be more correct to say, has shown the green light to Peking. This encouragement to go ahead, combined with the speed with which Mao Tse-tung has overrun the Chinese mainland including the N.W. Provinces, has set the stage for the next act which is the decisive one. Although consisting of several scenes, whose now inevitable development was the subject of my Cassandra-like warnings in the September and December issues of *Eastern World*, we do not know, and probably shall not know for some time to come, what bargains will be struck between the Kremlin and Mao Tse-tung as a result of the present extended conferences; but we do know this, and can draw certain conclusions: the Peking administration is financially embarrassed to such an extent that, if it is to succeed as the future government of China, and that country is not to relapse into war lord controlled chaos, either exceedingly massive direct financial aid must be forthcoming very early (and this can only come from Russia), or Mao Tse-tung must come to such an agreement with the Western democracies as will ensure the establishment of advantageous trade relations with the non-Communist world on a large scale, and the cessation of Kuomintang blockade by sea and air. What does this add up to? Russia is in a position to wait. Peking is not. Russia can, therefore, to a large degree call the tune. What tune is likely to result?

There seem to be for immediate consideration four alternatives to choose from, or at least four which have been given some prominence in the Press. First, a greater control within the Soviet orbit of China's Northern Provinces. Russia is, however, quite aware that she can so include those at any time and seems already to be doing so in any case. These seem, therefore, to have little bargaining value with Mao Tse-tung, although speed and scope of Russia dominance may be used as a "threat"

if the Russian tune is not danced to. Secondly, the suggested "complete control" by Russia by some seven ports on the Chinese mainland, giving Russia potential control (from a "land mass, be it noted) of the Yellow Sea. It is quite likely that some such demand has been put forward, but I feel convinced that at present, even if Mao-Tse-tung offered to agree, such an offer would not be actually taken up by Russia, since acceptance would involve such embarrassment with the U.S.A. as Russia is not at present prepared to invoke. Moreover, it would create an awkward precedent and invite similar action by the democracies in reprisal, clarifying, for instance, the Formosa puzzle. This "seven ports" demand, if actually made, is again merely a bargaining "threat" at the moment.

Thirdly, a stepping up of the Chinese "liberation" of Tibet. This, there is little doubt, Peking would be perfectly willing to undertake in any case, but not without such backing as Russia could guarantee, owing to the international reactions which would ensue.

Were Russia a peaceful, democratic, non-expansionist power, little world interest would be aroused if China acted in this manner, since China alone would never contemplate any further such action towards Nepal, nor would such action be a direct step towards the surrounding and isolation of India, which I have suggested in previous articles, is a main plank in Cominform "politik."

In parenthesis it may be noted that advance on India's western flank, the more important one, is still held in abeyance by Turkey's potentiality as a base for the launching of the existing "A" and future "H" bomb. But this, as Kipling used to say, is another story.

In connection with Nepal, I was interested to denote two remarks made by your contributor, "Bammuniya," in your earlier issues*. The first of these was a warning that Russian interest in and interference with Tibet was much on the increase, although no precise deduction could then be made from such phenomena. The second was that the Gurkhas of Eastern Nepal, the Limbus and Rais, were inclined to be more politically minded than the more phlegmatic Gurung. "Bammuniya" suggested (wrongly it appears, but do politicians always tell the whole truth?) that the selection of the 7th and 10th Gurkha Rifles to form 50 per cent of the Gurkha units to be transferred to the British Service might have been influenced by the wishes of the Nepal Durbar to give as many of these classes as possible an interest in world stability, and an insured income outside and pension inside their own homeland. It should now be noted, in direct connection with Cominform intentions towards Tibet, that since "Bammuniya's" articles appeared, Communism has taken a deep hold in the hill country of and adjoining Eastern Nepal, and that the Government of that country has recently had occasion to suppress with considerable severity Communist "disturbances" in these areas. The *fons et origo* of this political

* See *Eastern World*, June, 1947.

"enlightenment" in Eastern Nepal is, of course, the very active Communist movement in the Bengal area, but mark that here we see the usual pattern of Russian preliminary moves towards complete control—doctrinal infiltration. The speed with which this has been forced on in Nepal, Bhutan, and adjoining areas is at least ominous for the future of that country. It is also interesting to remember that in the past vague claims have periodically been made by China to Suzerainty over both Nepal and Bhutan, Compare Tibet.

Fourthly, an agreement that Peking will at once press on with the most active support of the Communist movements in the various disturbed lands of S.E. Asia. It is to take the form of actual physical backing to a degree which will enable existing Communist movements to overcome existing governments, and take over complete control of the countries concerned. As time is the essence of this step before existing governments, having the approval of the Western democracies can be consolidated, this would appear likely to be Russia's most immediate and insistent demand. It is also action in which Russia can claim the most detached attitude until she is prepared to come into the open, and is economically the most harmful to the Western world.

Let us examine, then, the present position in each country in order that readers may assess for themselves the chances of Communist success in S.E. Asia.

To the two countries geographically contiguous to China, Burma and Indo China, may now be added Thailand, since the complete Communist control of Northern Indo-China amounts to this. Of these, for reasons which will appear, control of Thailand is the most urgent for the Russians, and at the same time presents the greatest difficulties. Thailand, alone of the countries under consideration, has had, except for the period of the Japanese occupation, for a considerable historical period an autonomous government not subject to foreign control, and the tradition of freedom remains. It is true, however, that Communism has made considerable advance in late years and that events in China, Indo China and Burma are likely to facilitate its future speedy growth. Against this is the fact that the most influential of the considerable Chinese population are engaged in Big Business and so theoretically opposed to Communism and included towards the Western democracies. It seems, therefore, that so long as Thailand sees a reasonable chance of continuing her present freedom she will make every endeavour to do so. Only if she considers her position otherwise hopeless will she come to terms with Communism to the extent of surrendering any part of her national sovereignty—for example permitting the passage of foreign troops across her land, as in the late war.

The stability of Thailand therefore seems to depend on the amount of aid, financial and military, she can count upon from the West. If either are adequate, she is likely to accept. If they are not, she is likely to come to terms with Communism as with the Japanese. So far as I can ascertain the Western democracies, and the sterling area in particular, are not taking advantage of the plain lessons of past history. At present Russia is unlikely to take any overt action from which she could be held responsible for a "shooting" attack on Thailand, although it is not beyond the bounds of possibility that she might give her support to China in aggressive action, but such action is palpably within the measuring of aggression as covered by the U.N.

Charter, and would fully justify unstinted military aid to Thailand. Moreover, until both Burma and Indo China are fully under effective Communist control any military advance into Thailand, with objective Malaya, would be open to attack on both flanks.

Thailand, therefore, is considered in no immediate danger provided she is assured of Western support, and is not led to consider that her only hope of survival is in coming to terms with Communism.

Russia's most provocative recognition of the Communist organisation of Ho Chi-minh as the established government of Indo China immediately following French recognition of Bao Dai, is surely sufficient evidence that Russia now intends to force the pace in S.E. Asia. There is no doubt that Mao Tse-tung is being pressed to "go ahead" in Indo China. The whole of the northern area is already in the Communist fold and the remainder of the country Communistly minded. It is exceedingly doubtful if Press reports that Bao Dai's government is "making good progress" is within any meaning true: the contrary is more likely. Unless far greater direct military aid than seems possible can be accorded him and maintained by France, his influence seems likely to fade as rapidly and disastrously as that of Chiang Kai-shek in China itself, in all areas not directly under French bayonets. Events will, therefore, move very rapidly in Indo China unless there is a break between Mao Tse-tung and the Kremlin.

The authentic government of Burma has lost control of the situation completely, and there seems nothing whatever, except lack of communications, to prevent the Communist controlled north from taking over the whole country with the minimum of backing from Chinese forces. The Karens could, no doubt, be satisfied with the promise of autonomy, such promise having its usual value when Communist sponsored. They are, in any case, less anti-Communist than anti-Government. It seems, therefore, that Burma can safely be left to join the Communist fold in its own way. It is not unlikely, however, that if things are moving too slowly for Russia we shall shortly see the "recognition" by China and Russia of some puppet leader as the head of the *de facto* Government of Burma, after the Indo China model. It must be remembered that, Burma, having elected out of the Commonwealth completely, such action would not be as obviously provocative as that already taken against French interests in Indo-China—but equally it seems far less useful or necessary.

Earlier in this article I suggested that now Russia had decided to show China the green light in S.E. Asia, time was of the essence. The reason for this opinion is that Malaya is the primary objective of the Cominform; Burma, Indo-China, Thailand are only a necessary means to that end. It is not proposed to look beyond the mainland of Asia herein, and so deal with the former Dutch East Indies. But it was pointed out in a former article that Russia's object in these islands was to ensure the continuance of a state of disorder which would prevent economic recovery and the re-emergence of the East Indies as a major factor in world prosperity for the Western democracies, or, alternatively to ensure that should a stable government emerge it should be Communist controlled. In the case of Malaya the picture is even more clear cut. Marshall Aid ends in 1952 at the

(Continued on page 16)

THE INTERPLAY OF CHINESE SECRET AND POLITICAL SOCIETIES IN MALAYA (1)

By W. L. Blythe (Singapore)

THE present disturbances in Malaya have been the subject of comment in the Press of the world, and most people are now familiar with the fact that there are armed rebels living in the jungle, whose object is to embarrass and overthrow the present government. But such comments as appear are invariably superficial, and there is some perplexity in the minds of readers as to what lies behind this trouble. Does it arise from national aspirations, from racial antagonisms, from political antipathies or from secret society intrigue?

The first and most striking fact is that the movement is almost entirely confined to Chinese. A second important and interesting fact is that the Chinese are the principal sufferers.

The history of the Chinese in Malaya has, at all times, contained a large ingredient of secret society and political society activity, and it is pertinent to enquire into the present significance of such activities. At the outset it should be noted that the mass immigration of Chinese to Malaya is more recent than many people realise. In 1786, Penang was a practically uninhabited island. The same was true in 1819 of Singapore. The mass entry of Chinese to the Malay States in search of the wealth to be won from tin-mining did not set in until about 1850. And now the Chinese form forty-five per cent of the total population of Malaya, 2.6 millions of a total of 5.8 millions.

Over the years there have been three main currents of influence working upon the Chinese population in Malaya: Triad Societies, the Kuomintang and the Malayan Communist Party, and it is proposed first to summarise the history of these three main groups to the outbreak of the Japanese War in December, 1941.

Historically, the first of these influences was that of the Triad Societies. It was a feature of the early mass immigration of Chinese to Malaya that every new arrival (and they were all males) found himself at once in the toils of a secret "protective" society—a branch of the Triad Society, otherwise known as the Heaven and Earth Society, whose influence among the Chinese in early Malaya was all-pervading. The Triad Society has its origins in South China, and it was from the three Southern Provinces of Fukien, Kwangtung and Kwangsai that the mass influx of Chinese to Malaya took place. The date of the foundation of the Triad Society in South China is obscure, but according to one version of its own traditional history it was founded by five monks of the Shao Lin Monastery in Fukien Province who escaped when the monastery was sacked by order of the Manchu Emperor, Yung Ching, despite the fact that some years previously the monks of this monastery had been successful in driving out invading Mongol forces which threatened the throne of the former Manchu Emperor, Kang Hsi (1662-1723). As a result, the Order, for such it became, had from its inception not only a military aspect, but had also within its ideology an antagonism to the rule of a foreign dynasty,

and, as a corollary, a strengthening of the bonds uniting people of Chinese race. The Society developed an intricate ritual with oaths of secrecy, the penalty for infringement of which was death. There is an elaborate initiation ceremony in which "new horses" (recruits) are brought by "horse leaders" (recruiters) to the gates of the Lodge. There they are challenged by the "Vanguard," passwords in the form of traditional verses are exchanged, and initiation begins. The various stages of the initiation ceremony correspond to incidents in the traditional history of the founding of the Society, the adventures of the monks escaping from the burning monastery, their flight southwards, the various difficulties and dangers encountered, and their final reunion in safety at the "City of Willows," where, after a long catechism—again in traditional Triad verse—the middle fingers of the initiates are pricked with a needle, the expressed blood is mixed with wine and a solemn oath of fidelity and secrecy is taken by drinking this fluid. A white cock is decapitated as a symbol of the fate which will overtake traitorous members. Thereafter, the new member obeys without question the orders of the Society.

In China itself, the main role of the Triad Society was that of opposition to the Manchu regime. During the latter half of the nineteenth century vast numbers of Chinese from the southern Provinces of Fukien, Kwangtung and Kwangsai emigrated not only to Malaya and the Dutch Indies, but to America, Australia and the West Indies, in all of which places cheap manual labour was in great demand. With these emigrants went the Triad tradition and the Triad organisation—the "Tongs" in America and the "Huays" in Malaya, and it was from these overseas Triad groups, with their anti-Manchu ideology, that Dr. Sun Yat Sen drew a great deal of financial and moral support for his campaign which eventually overthrew the Manchus and established the Republic of China.

The central precept of the Triad ritual is "Obey Heaven and act righteously," but the history of the Society, particularly in its manifestations among Chinese overseas, has been one of degeneration into a "protection" and intimidation organisation, controlling gambling, prostitution, smuggling, piracy and similar rackets in ruthless fashion. It is no exaggeration to say that in the early days of the Chinese in Malaya the government of the Chinese community was entirely in the hands of the various Triad branches. These branches were frequently at enmity with each other, for although they all stemmed from the same original Triad stock, Chinese from specific regions in China—Hokkiens, Tiechiu, Cantonese, Kwangsais, Hakkas—retained their rival regional antagonisms, with the anomalous result that Triad fought Triad for the control of racketeering in specific areas. They arbitrated in disputes between members, and fought rival societies to avenge insults to or interference with their members. By 1890, it was clear to the Government of the Straits Settlements that

this method of "indirect rule" was unsatisfactory and that the Societies were a grave menace to public order, and in that year all such Societies were required to dissolve. Thereafter, their activities continued illegally throughout Malaya, but by the outbreak of the Japanese war their influence, exercised through the usual channels of intimidation and extortion, had weakened to such an extent that prosecutions were rare. The control of the mass of the Chinese population by the Societies had largely disappeared, leaving vestigial traces in small hooligan gangs, with some larger groups camouflaged as respectable clubs.

The Kuomintang Party, founded by Dr. Sun Yat Sen, for the propagation of the doctrine and spirit of Chinese Nationalism, has had a chequered history in Malaya, as indeed it has had in China. It came into existence in 1912, and the Malayan organisation was at all times under the direction and control of the Kuomintang Party in China, and followed exactly the Party line as laid down in China. This Party line has, over the years, varied considerably, more particularly in the early nineteen-twenties, when it became permeated by Russian influence, leading to a split in the Party, and later to a purge of Red elements. The reactions of these activities on the Chinese population in Malaya were most unsettling, and the Malayan Governments at that time regarded the Party as an unlawful Society, membership of which was punishable by law. Before the outbreak of the Japanese war the position was that membership of the Party was permitted, but the formation of branches of the Party in Malaya was prohibited. The Kuomintang has always had a great appeal to the merchant class, and has fortified its position by the teaching of Party doctrine throughout Malaya in Chinese vernacular schools sponsored by the Party. Just before the Japanese war a Youth Corps, known as the San Min Chu Yi Youth Corps, was formed. This organisation, though technically separate from the Kuomintang and controlled from a separate headquarters in China, was nevertheless the training ground for future Kuomintang members. And so, despite the prohibition of the formation of branches of the Party in Malaya, the Kuomintang in fact wielded considerable power. It had a well-developed underground technique, and was an ever-present influence linking the Chinese in Malaya with the Nationalist movement in China.

In the early 1920's Russia's organisation for the spread of Communism abroad—the Comintern—established a Far Eastern Bureau at Shanghai. This Bureau, through the agency of the China Communist Party, directed the introduction of the Communist movement to Malaya, whilst at the same time it ordered a similar inthrust to Indo-China, Siam and Burma. In Malaya, direct attempts by the Bureau to propagate Communism among the peninsular Malays met with failure. The China Communist Party, however, succeeded in penetrating night schools and craft guilds of the Hainanese section of the Chinese community (immigrants from Hainan Island, South China). In 1930 a reorganisation took place, and separate organisations were set up in each country to identify the movement more closely with individual areas, and with the individual races within those areas. Nevertheless, the direction of the Malayan Communist Party remained in the hands of the Chinese. At the expressed wish of the Third International, Malays and Indians have been included in "open" organisations, but there is every reason to believe that the Party

has never, to this day, allowed anyone of other than Chinese race to belong to its "inner cabinet," nor, indeed, to be a member of any of the controlling "secret" committees.

Before the Japanese war, the Party was an unlawful society in Malaya, and worked entirely underground. It achieved a considerable measure of success through the penetration of labour unions. In 1937, in China, a truce was called between the China Communist Party and the Kuomintang in order to form a united front of resistance to Japan. This pattern was followed in Malaya, and numerous "anti-enemy" groups were formed covering the entire Chinese population. Through these groups, the Communist Party under the cloak of patriotism to China was able to attract many people and organisations otherwise not interested in Communism, and to exert constantly increasing influence. By the end of 1939 it had attained an unprecedented control of the Chinese community in Malaya and sponsored a series of violent anti-British outbreaks, but early in 1940 the Kuomintang, realising that it was being engulfed, denounced the Communist Party and withdrew its support. In mid-1940, the Malayan Communist Party received instructions from China to soft-pedal anti-British activities so that the policy of British aid to China would not be endangered. Thereafter the Party concentrated on anti-Japanese activities, and when, in 1941, Germany attacked Russia, the M.C.P. adopted an increasingly pro-Ally policy, so that when, in December, 1941, a Chinese Mobilisation Committee was set up by the Government of Singapore, representatives of the Communist Party were invited to attend.

(To be concluded)



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FROM ALL QUARTERS

Stone Age Man in New Guinea

Islanders who had probably never seen a white man were recently encountered by a mining survey party about 350 miles up the Soeik River in North-East New Guinea. The members of the party said the inhabitants were so frightened when the party arrived that they disappeared into the bush, but three days later they returned with bows and arrows. However, they were not hostile but very cautious, and were so eager for supplies of metal that they offered to exchange a bow and a quiver of arrows for an empty tin. They were the only inhabitants encountered during the survey who were still using stone hatchets. Discussion between the two parties took place by means of sign language.

Health Campaign in Pacific Islands

The South Pacific Commission has now inaugurated an anti-tuberculosis drive among the island peoples under its jurisdiction. The Secretary-General of the Commission, Mr. William Forsyth of Australia, said that a team of specialists in tuberculosis would commence in New Guinea to find out the best ways of detecting the disease among the inhabitants and later to establish methods of preventing and curing it. Mr. Forsyth estimated that this work would take many years and would be extended to other islands in the Pacific.

International Canal Commission

Eleven countries interested in irrigation and canals have accepted India's proposal to set up a new international body, to be known as the International Commission on Irrigation and Canals. The main function of the Commission, the headquarters of which are to be in India, would be to encourage the study and progress in design, construction, maintenance and operation of large and small irrigation works and canals. The eleven countries who have agreed to become members of the organisation are Pakistan, Canada, Egypt, Brazil, Uruguay, the Netherlands, Switzerland, Thailand, Ceylon, Indonesia and Yugoslavia.

Korea Offers Friendship to Japan

During his recent visit to Tokyo, President Syngman Rhee made a formal offer of friendship to Japan. He said

that the present situation required a common understanding between the Korean and Japanese peoples, and if the Japanese realised this and were willing to co-operate then any problems existing between the two countries could be solved. After his return to Korea, President Rhee was asked whether he discussed in Tokyo his plan to invite Japanese technicians to help in training Koreans. He replied that when asked the same question by the Japanese, he pointed out that since the Japanese were taught by the Koreans about 350 years ago, the "Japanese ought to return the Koreans' kindness." The President was referring to the fact that after the Japanese warrior, Hideyoshi, unsuccessfully tried to conquer Korea in 1592, the invaders took back to Japan craftsmen from Korea to teach the Japanese to make pottery and other works of art.

Training of Colonial Officers

Many more officers of the higher branches of the Colonial Service, from Broadcasting and Civil Aviation to Survey and Veterinary Services, have been taking courses in Great Britain during the last two years. In 1949, 1,060 officers were trained, almost double the total for 1948.

The main development in training during the past year is the increased demand for shorter courses for officers home on leave, especially Administrative, Labour, Medical, Nursing and Police. Here training is designed to equip them with a knowledge of the latest developments and techniques in their own particular field. For example, the Fishery Courses include practical experience in all branches of fishing, including trawling and net-making. Some of the officers responsible for encouraging and guiding Colonial Trade Union movements are given a spell in British industry to see how labour relations are maintained here. Members of the ground staffs of Colonial airports are taught maintenance, flying control and fire-fighting. Courses in languages are given at the School of Oriental and African Studies in London, often to officers who are changing posts from one territory to another.

In addition, Local Government Authorities throughout the country have co-operated whole-heartedly and given invaluable help to officers requiring an insight into local government administration at home.

(Continued from page 13)

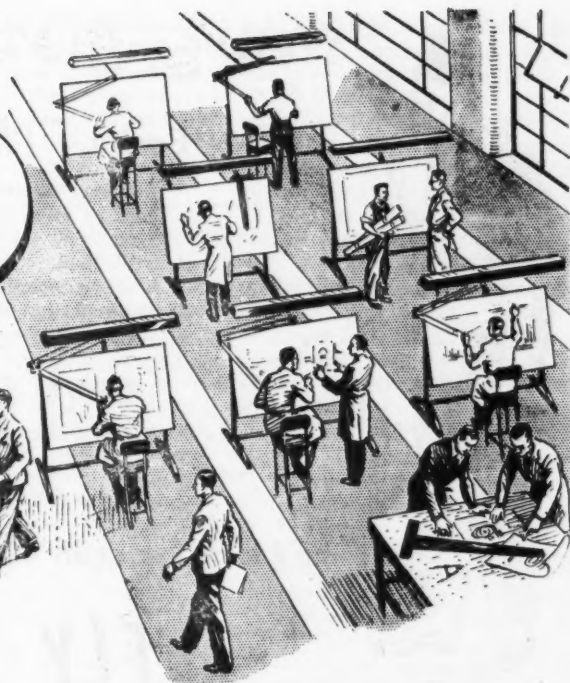
latest, and if Malaya cannot be brought to a state of internal order and prosperity at least commensurate with that existing before the last war, before that date the sterling-dollar situation will become absolutely insoluble for the sterling area, and the financial chaos for the Western democracies (including in the long run the U.S.) on which Russia is largely gambling to attain world Communism without a shooting war, will come about.

At present the situation in Malaya is showing no improvement despite Press reports to the contrary, and it

would be interesting to learn if Mr. Malcolm MacDonald is yet "prepared to say how long" he gives himself to restore order. If no very definite improvement is shown very shortly, it may well be that Russia will be content to let well alone in Burma, Indo China and Thailand. But if a recovery seems likely within the next 18 months, Communist control of these lands will be speeded up at almost any cost. Malaya, therefore, is the sounding board for Communist hesitation or advance in S.E. Asia, and of its speed. Let there be no mistake that chaos or Communism in Malaya is Russia's objective on the mainland of S.E. Asia.

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Squatter Resettlement in Malaya

Under a scheme prepared by the Malayan Chinese Association, a squatter resettlement camp is now being set up at Seremban in Negri Sembilan. Another type of rehabilitation camp has just been opened at Taiping, in Perak and the Johore Government is preparing a large resettlement scheme in the Kota Tinggi district. If successful, these schemes will ultimately be extended to all detainees capable of profiting from them. In the Seremban camp, each squatter family will be given a plot for cultivation, while timber and building materials have been supplied by the Malayan Chinese Association to help the settlers to build their own houses. Other Chinese sympathisers have provided free food, cooking utensils and clothing. The settlers have to observe a number of security measures, including a curfew, but outside curfew hours they will be free to go where they wish, the only condition being that they must not change their residence without official permission. The rehabilitation camp at Taiping is primarily for the purpose of re-education. It can accommodate 600 persons, chosen from detention camps throughout Malaya. After a period in the rehabilitation camp those who satisfy the authorities will be given their freedom and the Government is consulting public bodies to see that those released will be enabled to earn a living and support their families. In the case of the scheme being prepared by the Johore Government, it is estimated that the camp will accommodate about 1,500 families and will include provisions for health measures, education and a market place.

Report from North West China

In his report to the Central People's Government Council, General Peng Teh-huai, Chairman of the North West Military and Administrative Committee said that the whole of North West China has now been liberated and that People's Governments consisting of all nationalities parties and groups have been established on a provincial basis. North West China occupies one-third of Chinese territory, but has only about five per cent of the country's total population. Its petroleum reserves rank first in China, and deposits of coal, salt, iron and other valuable minerals are waiting to be worked. There are vast expanses of arable land which can be turned into fertile fields by means of irrigation projects, and the Yellow River can be utilised for generating power. At present, conditions in this region are backward. Agriculture occupies about 78 per cent of the entire economy and livestock raising over 20 per cent, with modern industry and handicrafts occupying less than 5 per cent. North West China is a multi-national area, and in Sinkiang alone there are 14 different nationalities, amongst them approximately 3,000,000 Uighurs, 2,500,000 Moslems, 500,000 Tibetans, 400,000 Kazakhs, and 100,000 Mongolians. The tasks now confronting the various areas in North West China differ according to conditions. In old liberated areas the main aim is to develop production while in other regions the completion of agrarian reform is urgently needed. In newly liberated areas, the main task is the suppression of local bandits.

LONDON NOTEBOOK

Korean Minister

Korea has now, for the first time, a diplomatic representation in London. Mr. Tchi Chang Yun, Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary from the Republic of Korea to the Court of St. James's, is the holder of this historic office and has presented his credentials last month. Educated in the U.S., he returned to Korea, where he became a prominent business man. After his country's liberation he was appointed Head of the Government Monopoly Bureau which controls ginseng, tobacco and salt. In 1948 he joined the board of the Bank of Korea, but was called to his present position at the end of last year.

Archaeology in Ceylon

A paper on Sinhalese Arts and Culture by Dr. S. Paranavitana, Archaeological Commissioner for Ceylon, was read at the Royal Society of Arts by Mr. Basil Gray in the author's absence. Sir Oliver Goonetilleke, High Commissioner for Ceylon, was in the chair. During the course of the lecture an able and comprehensive survey was made of the visual arts of the Island—architecture, sculpture and painting—with special reference to recent discoveries. One of the most interesting of these is an ivory statuette, believed to be of the second century A.D., found in the Ruvanvali Dagaba. It is known from the Buddhist Chronicles that some of the kings of Ceylon were adept in the art of carving in ivory; one king in particular was so proficient that it is stated that his work "appeared to be the outcome of some magic." This art of ivory carving survived the general decay and neglect of painting and the plastic arts which set in after the fall of Polonnaruwa in 1213, and even as late as the 18th century ivory carvings "of great charm and delicacy" were produced. Now that Ceylon has her own Archaeological Department, and

with the inspiration and scholarship of Dr. Paranavitana at its head, there are likely to be more important discoveries and fresh documentation in the history of her many centuries of rich cultural life.

Ancient Indian Architecture

Dr. B. N. Puri, lecturer at Lucknow University, gave an interesting talk on ancient Indian architecture to the Royal India and Pakistan Society at the Arts Council in London last month. Very little of the architecture of ancient India remains for us to know with certainty as far as style and the materials used are concerned. The famous palace of the Mauryan Emperors at Pataliputra, for instance, has vanished completely, and we know of it only through references to its splendours in the writings of Greek envoys to the court in the 4th century B.C. But such evidence as we have tells us that the commonest building material was wood and that fire was dreaded, as elaborate and strict precautions for fire fighting were instituted in the big cities. In spite of all this, these buildings must either have perished by fire during wars or through the ravages of white ants. The earliest cave temples which were dedicated to the Buddhist faith are part of this evidence. Although they were cut out of the living rock, the ribs of their barrel-shaped roofs were of wood, and the shape of the horse-shoe arch which formed the *chaitya*, or sun-window, copied that of wooden structures. The early cave temples, like the Lomas Rishi Cave, had many wooden structures, while later cave temples, at Ajanta, Ellora, and Elephanta, lose these wooden features and are entirely cut out of rock.

Japanese Prints

At last month's Berkeley Galleries' exhibition of Japanese prints, there were some well chosen examples of the various schools including the fairy-like drawings of Hoitsu (about 1800) made not for wood-blocks but for lacquer work. Among the colour prints there was a Hokusai from the famous "36 Views of Fuji" series; a delicate pink and pale green Haronobu—a landscape of feeling with Fuji in the background and the lapping water, a woman and a horse in the foreground. There was also a

fine Kiyonaga snow scene full of vigour and a splendid, bold design in which sweeping lines of black play a vital part. A Utamaro with boat, water and a woman has a curiously still poetic quality which is both moving and restful. The Hoitsu drawings are exquisite and show sensitivity of line with a full sense of the designs and pattern, which usually suit a circular shape. The most successful are the designs made from natural objects—some heads of barley, a pair of slender egrets, fine grasses and above all the beautiful group of deer—hinds and stags—which shows an artist of real power and accomplishment at work.

Indonesian Dancing

The interest roused by a single recital of Indonesian dancers in London recently, resulted in this journal sponsoring another short season of Indonesian dancing at Wyndham's Theatre on a larger and more lavish scale. Priceless old "gamelan" instruments had been specially lent for the occasion by the Indisch Instituut in Amsterdam, an outstanding example of cultural collaboration which deserves attention. The audience was tempted to compare the style of some of the symbolic Indonesian ballets with classical Indian dancing, from which it sprang, finding it less subtle and sophisticated but with a character of its own. Always there was the feeling of being in the presence of a people's art, a popular art to which the audience would contribute by their understanding of the themes and appreciation of the dancers' impersonations, parodies and romantic expressions.* The parallel might be the Morality and Mystery Plays of the Middle Ages with their devils, monsters and grotesqueries. The gamelan orchestra, in which the notes are fixed, lacks in consequence the subtlety and strangeness of the microtones of Indian classical music: essentially wind and string. It tends to grow monotonous unless the ear is attuned to its contrapuntal rhythms. But on the other hand it has richer overtones and more dramatic possibilities which build up the climaxes of the dance-drama magnificently.

* See the new pamphlet on Indonesian dancing, music and costumes, published by "Eastern World," 1/-.



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BOOKS ON THE

Message of Shrimad-Bhagavad-Gita by R. L. SHAH (published by the Author, Ahmedabad, 4s.)

The present work, as the author suggests, is a "humble attempt to understand the Lord's sublime song." Though a Jain by faith he has brought a passionately devout mind to bear upon the teachings of Lord Krishna, which he is eager to recommend to a wider public. The book starts with a moralistic anthology and finishes with a profusion of eulogy. It is not, therefore, "the actual translation of the verses" but an attempt to stimulate an atmosphere of didacticism where the Kuruksetra war, the *raison d'être* of the *Bhagavad-Gita*, is rarified into a symbol of a universal truth. The happy combination of prose and poetry makes pleasant reading and conjures up a nostalgic reminder of India's magnificent past though the pleasure is often interrupted by misprints.

Yoga: The Method of Re-integration by ALAIN DANIELOU (Christopher Johnson, 16s.)

The author brings an adventurous and ardent mind to one of the most complex and esoteric labyrinths of Indian thought. Following Jung, he calls Yoga the method of re-integration. But the clandestine nature of the subject has tantalised his ambitious approach, and the result is an unorganised medley gathered from heterogeneous sources.

According to the author there are nine methods of re-integration: (1) Hatha-yoga (re-integration by strength); (2) Raja-yoga (the royal way of re-integration); (3) Mantra-yoga (re-integration by means of hermetic utterances); (4) Laya-yoga (re-integration by mergence); (5) Siva-yoga (re-integration into Siva); (6) Karma-yoga (the path of action); (7) Jnana-yoga (the path of knowledge); (8) Bhakti-yoga (the path of devotion); and (9) Kundalini-yoga. The author is at a loss to differentiate between the various types which also are left unrelated to a common conception of Yoga. With perhaps Patanjali in mind the author conceives Yoga as a "physico-mental gymnastic," "aloof from emotional and sentimental impulses," then, he takes it as "identification with Divinity." However, the proposed definitions are too narrow to include all types of Yoga. The work further suffers from uneven distribution of emphasis. The first five technical methods, with the undue seclusion of Kundalini-yoga, have received primary consideration in preference to more widely popular methods of action, knowledge and devotion. Then, the borderlines and correlation between the methods in question are often blurred. The lack of diacritical marks, several misprints and the omission of some important references further deflect the quality of the work. Nevertheless it provides material for further research in this field.

S. BHATTACHARYA

FAR EAST

The Bugbear of Literacy by ANANDA K. COOMARASWAMY
(Dennis Dobson, 7s. 6d.)

It perhaps needs an Asiatic mind (or that of an European who has spent many years in Asia) to seize upon the element of patronage implicit in our general assumption that literacy, in itself, is the hall-mark of social, political and even general superiority. Certainly the ballot system of some Western countries, which asks no more of a man than that he should be technically sane, no criminal and can make a mark on a voting paper, would seem to indicate to an independent mind that a very strange lack of balance existed as to the value of votes cast.

If it is so important that men should learn to read and write is it not equally important that they should, at the same time, be helped to use these advantages to more effect than merely in reading the racing results and filling up football pool coupons? Yet for many millions this is the only use made of a great privilege. But for the enforcement of general education we might have in this land, as the author shows, many more illiterates but illiterates who possessed *instead* the traditional legends, songs and dances of their ancestors. The literacy school thus banishes native wisdom and traditional lore, putting in their place only tiresome repetitive practices as devoid of real interest as the dull work which wins so many men their daily bread.

In *Eastern Wisdom and Western Knowledge* the author again challenges the confusion of thought which characterises far too many speakers and writers on Asia. This essay will be of the greatest interest and value to all who realise that wisdom and knowledge are often poles apart, as also for those who like to know what has been done in the West to understand the mind of the East.

NEVILLE WHYMANT

Asia Major New Series Vol 1, Part 2. Edited by B. SCHINDLER (Taylor's Foreign Press, £2 5s. per volume)

Those of us who remember with gratitude the old *Asia Major* of pre-war days, looked forward eagerly to the promised resumption of publication when the preliminary announcement reached us some time ago. Now here we are already at Part Two of Vol. I of the new series.

Any slight doubts we may have had as to the possibility of the new series falling short of the achievements of the

Corrections:

The article "The Indian Viceroy," by H. G. Rawlinson, which appeared in our last (February) issue, was a review of *The Viceroy and Governors General of India* by VISCOUNT MERSEY (Murray, 16s.). It is regretted that, owing to printer's error, the name of the book was omitted.

Last month's advertisement of the *Oxford University Press* included the name and address of the quarterly *The Humanist Way*, Calcutta. We should like to stress that the *Oxford University Press* are in no way connected with that publication and that the advertisement should read as printed on this page.

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International Affairs

SOCIAL FORCES IN SOUTH-EAST ASIA

by CORA DU BOIS
10s. 6d. net

(for Minnesota University Press)

Dr. Du Bois is a distinguished American anthropologist who has been engaged, since 1942, in Intelligence work for the United States government, and is present Chief of the Southern Areas Branch in the State Department's Intelligence Research Office.

CORAL SEA, MIDWAY, AND SUBMARINE ACTIONS

by S. E. MORISON
Illustrated 42s. net

(Vol. IV of the History of United States Naval Operations in World War II.)

OXFORD UNIVERSITY
PRESS

earlier one have now been set finally at rest. The scope of the new series is, obviously, to be as wide and as satisfying as was that of the old. The first paper in the present part is from the pen of Professor Dubs; entitled simply "The Date of Confucius' Birth," the paper examines in detail the various Chinese accounts of the birth, life and death of Confucius and comes to the conclusion that an error has been made which has been copied and recopied, because ancient Chinese historians had not the means whereby to check the eclipse and other celestial records which were given to them by the astronomers of the time. Professor Dubs concludes that the real date for Confucius should be October 3rd, 552 B.C.

Professor Eve D. Edwards next contributes a charming study on "Liu Tsung-yuan and the earliest Chinese Essays on Scenery." In the course of an explanatory introduction the author gives a summary survey of the main styles of prose writing in use at the time when Liu began his new experiment. After putting Liu in his appropriate niche among the T'ang writers, Professor Edwards goes into more detail, finishing with versions of three poems and one short descriptive prose piece.

The third article is a detailed research by Dr. W. B. Henning, who is Professor of Central Asian Studies in the University of London, into "The Name of the 'Tokharian' Language." In five pages he reviews the numerous suppositions and conjectures hitherto made in this connection. Then he settles the matter once for all by adducing the fact that all previous arguments were based on a transcription error by the late F. W. K. Müller. This great scholar's reputation stood, deservedly, so high, that all felt justified in taking his reading on trust. Professor Henning himself admits that it was with "a start of surprise" that he suddenly realised that the colophon in question contained the irreputable proof all had so long been seeking.

It is, once more, evidence that our old professors were wise when they adjured us: "Go back to your sources and verify your references." Even Homer nods and the great scholars are, after all, human.

This profound study is followed by Chapter VII, in English translation, Chapter VIII in Tibetan, edited and translated by the late A. H. Francke, of *gzer Myig*, a Book of the Tibetan Bonpos. This is in the direct line of the old tradition, for the version beginning on page 163 is the English translation of the Tibetan text published in *Asia Major* VI, page 314 et seq.

For those interested in the study of Tai languages, Eugenie J. A. Henderson contributes a long and well-nigh exhaustive study of "Prosodies in Siamese." This will prove of the greatest possible value in showing the force of many of the rules governing the grouping of words in Siamese. How long we have waited for such studies as this on the members of the mainly monosyllabic group of Asiatic languages!

Last but by no means least comes the *piece de resistance* of this issue. At least it will be so regarded by many who were brought up in their Asiatic studies with Dr. Lionel Giles' regular papers in the Bulletin of the School of Oriental Studies (as it then was) on the Stein Collection of manuscripts from the Tun-huang caves. This is a long paper, divided into five main sections and several smaller sub-sections forming a preliminary account of the work of Henri Maspero concerning the Chinese documents on wood

and on paper, discovered by Sir Aurel Stein on his third expedition to Central Asia. This paper is by the Editor himself, who has been indefatigable in his efforts to get help in the publishing of the vast amount of material prepared by Maspero and left behind at his death.

There are many details of the first importance to be found in this "preliminary account" and they are further illustrated by eight pages of photographic reproductions. As one reads there is a constant urge to see the originals; at least one reader would spare no pains that the work of Maspero should see the light of day at the earliest possible moment. Only at the very end (on page 264) do we find our impatience stayed a little—though only a little—by a note which informs us that the Trustees of the British Museum have approved the publication of Maspero's work under the editorship of Arthur Waley.

The last few pages are taken up with Miscellaneous Communications, Bibliographical data and notices of books. Having lived closely with Vol. I, Part II of the new series of this publication for some fourteen days, we wonder only how long it will be before the next part arrives to gladden our eyes and stimulate our interest!

NEVILLE WHYMAN

Baluchistan by IMTIAZ MUHAMMAD KHAN (*The Diplomatic Press & Publishing Co., IS.*)

Though the title is misleading because the pamphlet is concerned with Baluchistan's educational problems only, this essay is highly informative. It implies that to give even rudimentary teaching to the less than a million inhabitants scattered over the 125,000 square miles of mostly desert area is to encounter well-nigh insurmountable difficulties.

About 10 per cent of the population are in need of education but only 12,400 (male and female) were enrolled on September 1st, 1947, in 101 primary and 17 secondary schools. Two years later the figures had risen to 18,500 school children (2,000 of which are girls), and the number of schools was 186 and 24, respectively.

For those who still remember the excellent services of the Baluch levies during World War I this is a truly sad picture, but the situation is, according to the author who is Director of Education, Baluchistan, not entirely hopeless. The above quoted figures prove his assumptions.

JOSEPH KALMER

REVIEW OF REVIEWS

THE January issue of the American Geographical Society's of New York *Geographical Review* contains, among other valuable contributions, Mr. B. H. Farmer's general survey of *Agriculture in Ceylon*. A Fellow of St. John's College, Cambridge, Mr. Farmer spent some time in Ceylon during the war, and he explains not only the difficulties encountered by Ceylonese agriculturalists on the technical side and the possibilities of development and modernisation but gives a remarkable study of the social stratification and the changes it is undergoing. The Saigon monthly *France-Asie* presents the Western reader with a genuinely Vietnamese novel, *Celui qui regnera*, by Pham Van Ky, who shows the psychological impact of Europe on an Indo-Chinese mind.

There are also some *Etudes Vietnamiennes* of more than ephemeral value. In the *Royal Central Asian Journal* (Vol. XXXVI, parts III-IV) we find a thorough analysis of *The Economic Development of Soviet Central Asia to the Eve of World War II* by Mr. Paul B. Henze of Harvard University. Being an examination of Soviet methods, it is not a historical but a highly topical study not only because Soviet methods in this semi-colonial area have not changed, but much more so because of their intensification in post-war days. The same issue contains also Mr. David Gamman's lecture on *The Background of a Pacific Pact*.

Attention should be drawn to the *International Labour Review's* (November, 1949) article on *The Development of Labour Legislation in Thailand* by Medhi Dulyachinda, whose essay, contrary to expectation, is not the dry unpalatable stuff one would expect from a law expert, but a lively overall picture of social conditions in this dictatorially overall picture of social conditions. Every reader with an interest in the most recent philosophical trends should have a look at Mr. M. N. Roy's quarterly *The Humanist Way* (Calcutta). More interesting—in the last issue—than Monsieur André Brissaud's presentation of Jean-Paul Sartre's existentialism is Mr. Parash Sen's new approach to the *Bhagavad Gita* and an analysis of Mr. T. S. Eliot's "Notes towards the Definition of Culture" showing how our poet defeats his own arguments by maintaining two contradictory positions, viz., the doctrine that religion is always a precondition of culture, and the "identity of religion and culture which prevailed at a more primitive stage."

India and Israel, published in Bombay, serves a dual purpose. It informs Indian Jews of what is going on in Israel, and Jews all over the world about the Jewish settlements, ancient and modern, in India. A series of articles on the 2,000 years old Jewish community of Cochin is most interesting. Another Bombay monthly, *United Asia*, presents such a wide range of information that practically every reader ought to find something of interest to him. Of more special value is *Asian Labour* (New Delhi) with very substantial studies of *Indian Labour since Independence*, by H. Venkatasubbiah; *Japanese Post-war Labour Movement* by Richard L. G. Deverall, and *Changing Patterns of Malayan Estate Labour* by U. A. Aziz.

Relazioni Internazionali (Milan), an Italian weekly on current affairs, have published in December last a special issue on Far Eastern affairs, giving a well documented survey of all Far Eastern countries from Ceylon to Japan, including even such areas as the Republic of Tannu-Tuva, incorporated in the U.S.S.R. in 1944, and matters like the work of the Roman Catholic missions in the East.

Far away from these "questions of the day" are the *Asiatische Studien—Etudes Asiatiques*, published twice a year in Berne, Switzerland, in English, French, and German. The latest issue reviews extensively new German and American literature on China, some of which it is very difficult to obtain. It contains also, among other contributions, Prof. Salmony's highly original *opusculum* on snake-ornaments on early Chou bronzes, and a catalogue of the late Prof. Paul Pelliot's posthumous works. *Kroniek van Kunst en Kultuur*, Amsterdam, reprints in its most recent issue *Eastern World's* feature article on Chinese paper-cuts and Joseph Kalmer's article on *Contemporary Chinese Literature*.

JOHN KENNEDY

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For a Human Advance

ABEL J. JONES. 'This new book by the author of *In Search of Truth* is a tonic for our times. It shows that science is not enough if the true spirit of man is to survive. This is a passionate plea that the new generation should rise to the level of its unexampled opportunities. Dr. Jones' book will be of great value in discussion circles.'—*Aberdeen Press and Journal* 12s 6d

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THE LITERARY BACKGROUND OF PAKISTAN

by Atiuzzaman Khan

THE political, social and cultural picture of India after the death of Aurangzeb was one of gloom and disappointment. The grand edifice of the Mughal Empire had been shaken to its foundations, and anarchy, lawlessness, feuds, and disorder were rampant throughout the entire country. The once powerful Shahenshah of the Mughals had been reduced to the position of an ornamental figure-head, stripped of power, pomp and splendour. The nobility was corrupt, and the middle-class illiterate, poor and unconscious of the tremendous changes which had taken place. Literature was stagnant and colourless and was dying out fast for want of court patronage, while art had dwindled into insignificance.

Such was the state of affairs when the British came to India and established their supremacy. Subsequent state encouragement helped the Hindus to steal a march over the Muslims in all fields of activities. The latter, on the other hand, did nothing to improve their lot. Instead they were bound by orthodoxy and tradition and ultimately the Muslims of India ceased to exist as a nation.

But slowly and steadily they were made to realise the gravity of the situation. It was realised that the Muslim masses must be goaded into action and it was found necessary that a *resumé* of the past glories and achievements of Islam should be presented to them in simple but intelligible language. Such was the mission of Mussaddas-i-Hali or the "Ebb and Flow of Islam." It was a revelation and a landmark in the literary history of the Urdu language. It was a poem of national regeneration, comparing the ideals and culture of Islam's past with the lethargy and decadence of the present age.

"Its chief merit," says Saksena,* "consisted in taking stock of the national virtues and vices. . . . The poet goes back to the times of ignorance, the pre-Islamic period in Arabia and draws a lurid picture of a sandy and rocky country. Then a rapid survey takes us through the services of Islam in the moral and intellectual world and we are told as to how the Muslims made their home in every clime and country and left their traces in Spain, Baghdad and the Himalayas."

This poem was printed, distributed, sung in assemblies, mosques and conferences and took the country by storm. To Hali, therefore, belongs the credit of bringing an unconscious people to the state of negative consciousness. Truly speaking, it was a landmark in the history of Muslim regeneration.

Having regained consciousness the Muslims of India found themselves in a pitiable plight. Politically, socially, economically and educationally they were miles behind the Hindus. In the political field they had no voice whatsoever; socially they were a poor, incoherent and disjointed unit; economically they were no match for the Hindus and educationally they were shamelessly backward due mainly to the conservative shackles and orthodox religious impositions.

At such a period of national degradation a selfless worker, an efficient guide and a true well-wisher was needed. And such a man came in the person of Sir Syed Ahmed-Khan to whom Muslim India is grateful for its intellectual advancement and cultural renaissance. His magnetic personality gathered together a band of literary enthusiasts whose activities were of far-reaching importance. The chief amongst them were Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk, Wiqar-ul-Mulk, Chirag Ali, Zakalillah, Hali, Shibli and Nazir Ahmad.

Hali was the national bard; Nazir Ahmad wrote didactic tales to improve and to educate; Shibli and Zakaulah were the historians; Chirag Ali, Wiqar-ul-Mulk and Mohsin-ul-Mulk wrote on literature and on general, mostly controversial, topics.

The foundation of the Anglo-Oriental College at Aligarh ushered in a new era for the Muslim youth of India. The general outlook of the class and the mass was reconditioned and liberalised overnight and the cult of "westernisation" received a new impetus. Western habits, customs, methods—and evils too—were picked up and cultivated with religious fervour combined with childish haste.

The break with the past seemed complete but the newborn occidental outlook did not find the cradle of Oriental environment to be very congenial for a prosperous and healthy growth. Over-estimation of one aspect led to an underestimation of the other one consequently the sense of discrimination between right and wrong, good and bad, past and present became blurred with the result that everything oriental was looked down upon with contempt and ridicule.

The Muslims of India were singularly fortunate in having the services, guidance and sympathies of no less a person than Sir Mohammad Iqbal at a time when these were needed most. He came forth with a message which was unique in its conception, international in its outlook, liberal in appearance and pan-Islamic in essence. It was in fact a message of deliverance for struggling humanity in general and down-trodden Muslims in particular.

To bring about a synthesis of conflicting ideologies and to divert centrifugal forces into one single point, Iqbal found it necessary that the so-called permanent "values" of both East and West should go through an elaborate process of intellectual grinding. The net result was the creation of a refined product which has been variously called as self-culture, self-elevation and self-determination. Concerning the qualities of a true leader he says:

"A liberal outlook, pleasing eloquence and a burning heart—these are the provisions of journey for a leader of the caravan." Regarding the role of self in relation to sovereignty he opines: "Who does not cherish the desire for sovereignty but of what use is that hegemony if in its attainment self suffers annihilation." Then again: "Your life is due to self, your honour depends on it; if it is there the world is yours, if not degradation awaits you."

Iqbal made it clear that if the Muslims were keen about

* *History of Urdu Literature.*

their task of nation-building their only remedy lay in cultivating the spirit of self-determination. It was in reality a magic wand capable of performing miracles. And the miracle did happen. In the course of less than a decade Iqbal's poetical dream was transformed into a political reality. Quaid-i-Azam's unique creation of Pakistan is, in letter as well as in spirit, the practical application of the theory of self-determination in the province of politics.

Thus, Pakistan, which has been dubbed as "a sublime piece of nonsense" and "an impractical proposition," is, in fact, the culmination of long simmering forces, a synthesis of warring ideologies and, above all, a successful attempt at joining together the brilliant bits of creative thinking. Its seed had been sown long before in the intellectual soil and its rapid growth has been made possible by the combined efforts of poets, philosophers, patriots and politicians.

THE INDIAN FILM

by Kumar Devarajah (Colombo)

THE Indian Film Industry has stabilised itself today with millions of rupees as capital, and is one of the major industries of the country. At its start it had to struggle for existence as it was unable to attract sufficient investors who feared that this new form of entertainment would not return adequate profits. A few took the risk, however, and gambled on this new method of entertaining. The result is that the cinema has invaded even the remotest Indian villages where it is able to provide entertainment, for as little as two annas, to numerous poor people.

Since India and Pakistan attained independence, the English-language film has lost its popularity and except for the "high-brow" Indian or Pakistani or the Anglo-Indian, the rest prefer films in their own mother tongues. Films are produced in India in several languages, mostly in Hindustani, Bengali, Urdu, Telegu and Tamil.

Those who are accustomed to the films produced by Hollywood, Britain and the European Continent would find the Indian film tiring, for almost all Indian pictures run for over two hours and there are some (especially those produced in South India in Tamil) which run for over 200 minutes. The chief ingredient in an Indian film is the music, for every film produced has in it a plethora of songs, sometimes as many as twelve, and for the sake of hearing one song alone will a picturegoer visit that cinema repeatedly. There can be no other reason but this to attribute to the abnormal long runs of Indian films, some of which have run for 18 and 20 months at the same cinema.

There are no love scenes in Indian films in the Western sense. Yet there are love scenes in Indian films which are so cleverly introduced that the young girl in the audience need not close her eyes or the matron consider it "vulgar." There are, however, no kisses on the Indian screen. Even if for art's sake an actress is willing to submit herself to an embrace or a kiss, the reception that the film will receive from the audience would not be very pleasant, while the reputation of the actress would be at stake. It is difficult to pick the reason for this attitude which the Indian cinema-goer adopts towards such scenes, for when he sees foreign films, almost all of which have a few kisses thrown into it, he sits calmly in the cinema (although there may be a few hoots from the gallery), but when even a hug between a husband and wife or a pair of lovers appears in an Indian film, he will raise an uproar.

All stories on which Indian films are based are of the virtuous type—one seldom or never sees an Indian film where murder, theft or dishonour towards one's parents is shown. By seeing foreign films that are screened in the cinemas of India and Pakistan the uneducated cinema-goer quickly forms the opinion that life must be the same as depicted in the films in such countries as England, America and the European Continent. Many will remember that scene in "Mildred Pierce" in which Joan Crawford's daughter slaps her. When this film was shown in some Indian and Ceylon towns the press was flooded with letters and the authorities had to step in and incise this portion while in some other towns the film was completely banned.

Only recently have the Indian film-producers abandoned the subject of mythological themes and come down to the present-day world for their plots. Yet, it is the religious film or one with some tinge of religious atmosphere that pays at the box-office. The religion chosen is usually Hinduism, but recently there has been a trend towards Roman Catholicism after the Hollywood versions of "Song of Bernadette," "Going My Way," etc., and a Tamil film has already been produced based on the well-known legend of the Blessed Virgin appearing to a South Indian princess named "Gnanasoundari." This film ran for over 15 months in several cinemas in South India and in Ceylon it enjoyed a six-months' non-stop run.

One of the most glaring omissions in the Indian film industry is the absence of competent scenario writers, for at present most of the stories are thought of by producers and directors with unsatisfactory results. A few of the major film concerns are always prepared to read original stories but the lack of able script writers is evident in almost every Indian film. Some producers are now abandoning the worn-out stories of Rama and Sita, Krishna and Radha because they realise that innumerable plots could be manufactured from the present-day India to show to the world the habits and customs, the literature and music, the awe-inspiring Everest and the marvellous Taj, the gardens of Kashmir and the frescoes of Ajanta. The money is there, the magic beauty of the Orient is there, stories are there in abundance only waiting to be written, experienced actors and actresses and music composers are available with the two exceptions of directors and script writers who give substance to the shadow.

THE GREAT MAN

by Herbert Chambers

MANY years had passed since Ho Ling first set eyes on Macassar; yet the passage of time had never failed to dim that first breath-taking sight when, as a small boy, he had stood in the ship's bows, tightly gripping his father's hand, and watched the island of Celebes float out of the morning mists—a turquoise and golden gem set in a translucent sea.

And now, almost half a century later, he could still recall those first vivid impressions of the colour-washed houses with their red-tiled, overhanging roofs; the butterfly gaiety of the Malay women's dress, and the noise and life of the great fish market. In the course of time he inherited the modest business his father had established, and gradually, imperceptibly almost, much of the tranquil serenity of the Islands had become absorbed into his being, to become part of his own simple philosophy.

And now Ho Ling's face was no longer plump-cheeked and eager—a thousand tiny wrinkles had ingrained themselves in the faded ivory skin, and the eager look had long since been replaced by one of mild and gentle tolerance. He sat daily in his little open-fronted shop, surrounded by an assortment of spices, dried and desiccated fish, tortoise-shell and paper lanterns; and looking out upon the passing world found much in it that pleased him.

A bead curtain parted softly and Mai-da entered and placed a tray before her husband. Her old eyes were bright with excitement as she asked: "At what hour is your brother expected now?"

Ho Ling poured out his tea. "The ship is due at any moment," he said. "Wang wrote that he would come immediately from the docks, for he has little time to spare for his visit."

Mai-da's excitement and curiosity all but consumed her, and she was unable to resist another question. "Is it true that he is a very great man?"

"He has much wealth," Ho Ling sipped his tea, inhaling the delicate fragrance appreciatively. "Since he left us and crossed the seas, he has prospered greatly. Even now he is seeking the nationality of the country of his choice. The West has claimed him. Yes, I suppose we cannot but say that he is a great man now."

A shadow fell across the open doorway, and Mai-da fled in haste as Ho Ling rose to greet his brother. "The years are easy to recall," he said gravely. "It seems but yesterday that you left us, my brother." He did not add that he hardly recognised the short, rotund figure dressed in an expensive Palm Beach suit; nor did he fail to observe

that the other's large horn-rimmed glasses only partly concealed the loose, baggy flesh beneath the eyes. The man before him might well have been a stranger.

Wang seated himself and glanced round the little shop with ill-concealed amusement. It reminded him of those tiny stores tucked away behind the waterfront at San Francisco, which he passed in his car every day on his way to his office—and he wondered now why he had bothered to make this call on his brother. His time was limited, for he had important business with one of the island's biggest export firms, and his ship left again early in the afternoon. For a short while he talked volubly; epitomizing his success story and leaving his listener in little doubt that he, Wang, had progressed immeasurably from the family back-water, and now dwelt securely amid the fleshpots of the West. "Ambition is unknown to these people," he thought. "Their lives are futile and ineffectual. If I had not broken away when I did I should have been just such another failure!"

Wang waved aside the proffered cup. He was becoming uncomfortably aware of an all too familiar pain in his stomach, and taking a bottle from his pocket, swallowed three white tablets. Time was passing. Valuable time; and already his mind was turning on the forthcoming interview, weighing the chances of driving a hard bargain. His name alone should be enough to induce a sense of inferiority in the firm's representative; he had used this weapon too often to underrate its value, and he never failed to enjoy the process of ruthless beating down.

At length he rose and took his leave, and once outside did not pause to even glance back at the little family shop. Almost immediately Mai-da came from behind the curtain and speech bubbled from her like water from a mountain spring. "Such a man! Such importance! Such opulence! Why, it passed understanding almost that her brother-in-law, her own flesh and blood almost, could have attained such exalted heights! Who could not but respect and admire the greatness of such a man?"

Mai-da's tongue ceased only when she became aware that her husband did not appear to be listening. Indeed, it seemed as if he had completely forgotten his brother's visit already, and had withdrawn into a world of his own.

Ho Ling was leaning forward slightly and peering out of the rear window of the shop to where his two chubby young grandchildren romped joyously in the bright hot sunshine—an expression of almost sublime content upon his wrinkled, ageing face.

India to Found Population Institute

India is establishing an institute for the study of population statistics. The founder is Dr. S. P. Chandrasekhar, until recently in charge of population research at Unesco. The Institute will function under the auspices of the Annamalai University where Dr. Chandrasekhar is head of the economic department. In addition to studying all aspects of Indian and Asiatic demographic problems, it will act as a co-ordinating centre for the researches of social scientists.

Refugee Doctors for Pakistan

A group of 53 refugee doctors left Rome recently for Pakistan, where they will be resettled. Their move is a direct result of I.R.O. Director-General J. Donald Kingsley's world canvas for specialist and professional jobs. The Pakistan project began after Major General S. M. A. Faruki, Director-General of Pakistan Health Services, mentioned Pakistan's doctor shortage.

ECONOMIC SECTION

Banking in the Indian Sub-Continent (1)

by L. Delgado

IT is popularly supposed that banking first began in Italy some time in the 16th century. But Indian literature—chiefly the Buddhist *Jatakas*, the *Mahabharata*, some books in the Buddhist *Tripataka*, Kantilya's *Arthashastra*, and the earlier *Dharmashastras*—make it quite clear that there was a well-organised banking system in India in the 5th century B.C. There were then in existence various guilds, called *Srenis*, carrying on commercial and industrial activities. These guilds received permanent deposits and held religious benefactions, and in the course of time developed a system of deposit banking and undoubtedly exercised many of the functions of banks.

The heads of these guilds were the *Sresthis*, who were wealthy bankers. They financed traders for the ordinary purposes of their trades as well as merchant adventurers who went overseas, and explorers who travelled widely in search of valuable materials. And, as in Europe much later, they lent money to kings and princes in times of war or of difficulty.

There is nothing strange in the early rise of banking in India. In the East, trade with distant parts has existed for many centuries, and such commerce has always had to be financed. Whoever exercised this function was, in effect, a banker. Certain merchants specialised in this form of commerce, though they did so as a subsidiary of their trading activities. But in so far as they financed trade, these people, called *mahajans shroffs* or *chettys* were no different from any private bankers who appeared much later in Europe.

Banking functions proper were naturally restricted. Moneylending was the main business, and Buddhist texts abound in references to these practices. Usually money was lent on interest, but sometimes no interest was required. Payment could be made in cash or kind or by the performance of an allotted task. There was no written bond or similar instrument. Failure to pay principal or interest led to imprisonment.

Coming to the early Hindu period we find that banking was developing along lines that are familiar to us. Manu devotes two chapters to "Deposits and Pledges," and "The Recovery of Debts." Bankers accepted deposits from people and princes and financed the trade of the country and to a certain extent the needs of the State. From the end of the 1st century A.D. to well into the 4th century, banking prospered in the country.

During the Mohammedan era there was a series of invasions which led to a period of uncertainty and insecurity.

But banking received considerable encouragement from the many kings and princes who found in it a pillar of strength. Sometimes these rulers refused to honour their debts and even plundered the banks. For instance, as late as 1742, Mir Habib, a Mahratta general, fell upon the banking house of Pagat Seth and robbed it of the enormous sum of £2½ million.

We cannot close this rapid survey of the early period of Indian banking without drawing our readers' attention to the basic foundation of the profession, which dates to the practice of money lending that existed in the Vedic period (c. 2000 B.C.). However, very few details, apart from the knowledge that it existed, are available. It appears that borrowing was for private needs or for the game of dice—not unlike Western experience during the early Middle Ages. Failure to repay debts was a matter for condemnation, sometimes leading to the slavery of the debtor.

The modern aspect of banking dates from the arrival of the English. The East India Company found that it could not use the machinery of indigenous banking for the financing of trade. The Company was not conversant with the language, while the local bankers had no experience of Western trade methods. The incessant wars of the period rendered it unsafe for people to entrust their savings to the banks, such as they were, and resort was made to secret hoards. Many banks were unable to honour their promises. Some of them were led to adopt questionable devices, and not infrequently the bankers were themselves cheated by their customers. By the end of the 18th century, the local bankers had been shorn of much of their glory. However, individual bankers continued to prosper, but banking was combined with commerce.

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Their position further deteriorated during the later years of the East India Company's rule, when the currency system of the country was unified. This circumstance robbed the *shroffs* of their most profitable business—money changing. During the first quarter of the 19th century, the Company became the paramount power in India in place of the many petty principalities, and this dealt another heavy blow to the *shroffs*, who now ceased to be State financiers.

It should not be thought, however, that the *shroff* was doomed to disappear. To this day, a large part of the internal banking business of the country—90 per cent according to Sir George Schuster—is in his hands. There are several reasons for this. The *shroff* is found in the villages. There are several *lakhas* of scattered villages without a modern bank. Out of 2,500 towns, less than 400 have a bank. In the whole of the sub-Continent there are only two banking offices for every million of the population, as against 285 offices in the United Kingdom. This absence of competition largely explains the continued existence of this type of indigenous banking. But the *shroffs* have a close personal contact with their customers and their methods of work are simple and inexpensive. They nearly always combine banking with some form of trade, wholesale or retail, and by these means are able to utilise funds that might otherwise be idle, while producers are bound to the lenders by a tacit or explicit understanding to sell their produce to them. There is no reliable estimate of the working capital of indigenous bankers. It is certain, however, that they occupy a predominant position in financing agriculture everywhere and the internal trade and small industries of the United Provinces.

But the system of indigenous banking suffers from various serious defects. The native bankers cannot or will not adapt themselves to modern conditions. Most of them do not keep proper books and very few indeed would satisfy the requirements of a Western auditor. Moreover, they are not prompt in their payments or in crediting customers with receipts. They are disorganised and scattered; they publish no figures and make no tax returns. In many respects they are a law unto themselves. It must be admitted that trading and banking are best when in different hands. Money that these bankers hold in trust for third parties may be so tied up as not to be repayable on demand—and this question of repayment on demand is the very essence of banking proper. So far as money lending is concerned, anyone—however illiterate—takes to it. In the profession are many Indian women, specially widows, who advance money against the security of gold and silver ornaments. In the more august circles of banker-traders, the principal caste engaged in money lending are the *Vaishyas*, and there is hardly any commercial town in which they are not to be found. The Mohammedans are forbidden by the Koran to take interest, and their position in Indian banking is almost negligible. Their objection to interest is on ethical grounds, on much the same principle as that adopted by the Christian Church in the Middle Ages. But once that capital is used for productive purposes, as the vast bulk of it is today, the moral objections fall to the ground. Capital is a vital factor of production, and it is right that it should share in the wealth that it helps to create. The Christian Church has altered its stand on this question, and there are signs that the Mohammedans are doing so, too.

The shortcomings of the local banking system led the East India Company to transfer its patronage first to the European Agency house and later to the Presidency banks. European banking in the sub-Continent began with the establishment of what are known as "Agency Houses," which started in Calcutta and Bombay. They were bankers in the sense that they accepted deposits and granted loans, but their main business was that of general trading—in principle no different from the local Indian bankers. They were shopkeepers, ship owners, brewers, tanners, distillers, and owned cotton, flour and saw-mills. They became the agents of the civil and military services and for the European bankers and merchants who settled in the country. They had little capital of their own, depending for funds mainly on the savings of the employees of the East India Company. With this money and the deposits they received from the general public they financed the movement of crops, and the indigo business, as well as the cultivation of silk, opium and cotton.

As might be expected from this type of trading, the interest rates charged were high, the average being 12 per cent. Anti-usury laws fixed the maximum rate at this figure, but other charges increased the rate to 18 or 20 per cent. When the trade of India was opened to all in 1813, new firms entered the field. There was considerable speculation by the agency houses and a first-class crisis occurred in 1825, when several important firms failed following the withdrawal of money by the depositors. Once again the extreme difficulty of combining trade with banking was amply demonstrated. The conduct of the former requires speculative virtues that cannot be reconciled with the conservative principles called for when dealing with other people's money.

It was deemed advisable, therefore, to divorce the two branches of commerce and to set up purely banking institutions on Western lines. But early attempts at joint-stock banking were not very successful. The first bank in India with limited liability was the General Bank of India, established in 1786. It is interesting to note that the principle of limited liability was not applied to banking in the United Kingdom until 1855. The General Bank deserves to be remembered because it enforced strict measures against corruption and used improved business methods. But the bank had to be dissolved in 1791, after the difficulties arising from the famine of 1788. The financial instability of the country at this time was such that banking was a precarious business.

The authorities sought therefore to establish institutions which would render banking services without incurring undue risks, and to achieve this it was deemed necessary to exercise direct control over their management. This began the era of the Presidency Banks, the first of which, started in 1806, was the Bank of Calcutta. It had powers of trading on its own account, but these were withdrawn in 1809, when its name was changed to the Bank of Bengal. The Government of Bengal had subscribed 20 per cent of the capital. It was entrusted with the funds of the Government: its notes alone were recognised. It had great prestige and was easily the leading bank. The second Presidency Bank was the Bank of Bombay, established in 1840, followed by the Bank of Madras in 1843.

(To be continued)

PAKISTANI TRADE UNIONISM

by ²Harold A. Sims

THE earliest date in the Pakistan Trade Union Movement is the formation, in 1890, of the Bombay Millhands' Association. The Madras Labour Union formed by Mr. B. P. Wadia in 1918, however, may be regarded as the first Trade Union in the proper sense to be founded in the Indo-Pakistan sub-Continent.

The first All India Trade Union Congress was created in 1920 by Mr. Narayan Malhar Joshi. The Combined Trade Union Congress mustered about 354,500 members with 191 Affiliated Unions at the time of the Partition.

Pakistan's present day figure of 191,720 trade unionists is composed for the most part of industrial workers. There are organisations for the agricultural workers. There is, at first sight, a remarkable absence of trade unionism among the agricultural workers, who form the bulk of Pakistan's labour force. There are organisations for the agricultural workers, but they lack cohesion and a definite programme. This want of initiative may be due in part to the numbers of potential leaders who have been drawn into the towns by new building projects.

While the Government has recognised the right of workers to organise and bargain collectively, legal protection is given to the legitimate activities of the workers' organisations under the Trade Unions Act of 1926. This Act leaves registration to the choice of the trade unions and provides that "any seven or more members of a trade union may, by subscribing their names to the rules of the trade union or by otherwise complying with the provisions of this Act with respect to registration, apply for registration of the trade union under this Act."

The Trade Union Amendment Bill is still under Government consideration. This Bill aims at making the recognition of some Trade Unions (which fulfil certain conditions) obligatory on the part of employers.

Returns, under the 1926 Act, relating to the number of unions, their membership and finances, are collected and compiled by the Labour Bureau of the Government of Pakistan. Registration is not compulsory and unions which are not registered send no returns to the Labour Bureau—thus there are no statistics available for the non-registered unions. There are three main labour federations in Pakistan: the Eastern Pakistan Trade Unions Federation, Narayanganj; the Pakistan Trade Union Federation, Lahore; and the Pakistan Federation of Labour, Karachi.

Registered trade unions are legally authorised to maintain a general fund and also a fund for political purposes. The first is for the normal expenses incurred in trade union activities.

The political fund is to further the civic and political interests of union members in the furtherance of any of the objects of the unions specified in the Act. The Act also requires that all the registered unions submit to the Provincial Governments an audited statement of all receipts, expenditure, assets and liabilities.

The Reforms Act of 1919 provided labour representation in the Legislatures. This Act was modified in 1935 and

accepted the principle of equality of representation of labour on the one hand and of commerce and industry on the other. It also provided that the labour seats be filled either through registered trade union Constituencies or through special labour Constituencies.

To qualify as an electoral unit under the 1935 Act, a trade union—provided it has been in existence for two years and that it has been registered a year before the preparation of the electoral rolls—has but to claim a minimum paid membership of 250 for the financial year and to certify that, in conformity with the Act of 1926, books and accounts have been inspected by the Registrar of Trades Unions and the Auditor.

There is now a permanent Tripartite Labour Conference and a Standing Labour Committee. On both bodies the workers and employers are allowed four seats each, which include one seat each for the landed interests and agricultural workers. The representatives of employers and employed are nominated by the Government, in agreement with the most representative of their organisations.

As a member of the International Labour Organisation, the Pakistan Government affords the opportunity to her Trade Union leaders of taking part in the deliberations of the International Organisation. The nomination of the entire Pakistan Delegation rests with the Pakistan Government. In pursuance of the terms of the Constitution of the I.L.O., however, the employers and workers delegates, with their advisers, are nominated in agreement with those industrial organisations which are the most representative of employers or workpeople.

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COPRA PRODUCTION IN THE FAR EAST

by Howard Fox

THE refusal of the United States Commodity Credit Corporation to grant a loan of \$25 million to Indonesia for the purpose of increasing exports of copra and palm oil has been a big disappointment to the industry. Negotiations had been proceeding for some time. The refusal was based upon the belief that the world supply position of vegetable oils and fats has so greatly improved, especially as regards copra and palm oil, that loans for additional expansion would not be commercially justifiable.

Indonesia, Malaya, Ceylon, the Malabar Coast and the Philippines are the main copra producing countries of the world. The coconut palm grows throughout the entire Indonesian archipelago and is, for the most part, cultivated by the native population on their own ground. The oil obtained from the nuts is used in every native household and there are, of course, also other products extracted from the tree. The use of the coconut palm for the extraction of the alcoholic beverage known as arrack is fairly widely appreciated but in conclusion mention should be made of other and little known bye-product potentialities of the copra industry. Locally considered, these may be quite economic propositions. They include sugar (jaggery) and vinegar. Coconut shells when subjected to distillation pro-

cesses yield high-grade charcoal, tar and other chemical products. The charcoal may be used for the manufacture of a carbon for the absorption of gases (e.g., in gas masks), for deodorising and decolourising purposes and the making of high explosives. Phenolic plastics are currently expensive and coconut husks, which contain 40.77 per cent lignin, can be utilised cheaply for this purpose. In Java and especially in the Outer Islands, special coconut palm gardens have been organised for the purpose of obtaining copra. The nuts are decorticated and the white flesh removed and dried; in this state it is exported and used as raw material for the oil industry. The principal requirements for successful cultivation are fertile, loose and porous ground and a not over-dry climate. Stagnant water, particularly brackish water, is fatal for the growth of the palm. Favourable conditions prevail in a number of islands in the Moluccas, Bali, Lombok, part of Celebes, West Borneo and the west coast of Sumatra.

Next to tea, products based on coconuts yield the largest money income in Ceylon, a fact which explains why the Government of that country is so greatly concerned at the conditions of the industry. "If we are to survive as a copra and oil exporting country," declared the report of the Coconut Commission, "if we are not to suffer the same fate as India and be reduced gradually from an exporting to an importing country so far as coconut products are concerned . . . then the Government must be alive to the situation and take adequate measures. . . ." The average yield in Ceylon has been expertly calculated at 1,800 nuts per acre per year; from figures based on export and consumption returns the 1948 yield was 1,862 nuts per acre per year.

Factors contributing to the serious decline in Ceylon's copra industry are fully discussed in the report which was issued by the Government as a sessional paper last October. High up in the list is soil erosion which also adversely affects the Dominion's tea and rubber estates. For the palm, having no tap roots and living mostly on the top soil, is an easy victim to the abrasive effects of wind and rain and in some undulating lands, the commission noticed trees with exposed roots and an absence of contour platforms round many others.

Lack of careful fertilising is also advanced as a serious liability and the commissioners found harsh things to say about the failure of the estate holders to plough back into the soil a reasonable percentage of profits for development. This is hardly a stricture against "peasant producers" for it has been revealed, somewhat surprisingly, that of Ceylon's coconut plantations covering a total area of 1,075,000 acres, only 155,000 acres are held in under 20-acre lots.

This failure to take the long-term view has resulted in about 40 per cent of the island's coconut trees being over 60 years old (the majority are between 30 and 60 years).

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"This denotes a serious state of affairs," declares the report which adds that an immediate start should be made upon schemes of replanting and underplanting. To help rectify the situation the report recommends the creation of a "Rehabilitation Fund" into which the Government should contribute Rs. 5 million each year from general revenue, or into which it should pay all duties in the past, present and future, collected from export duties on coconut products and all the profits from trading activities in such products.

As for export market possibilities before the Ceylon industry, the Indian Union and Pakistan are wide open for profitable sales development in copra and palm oil; the annual shortage in the Union alone is about 102,000 tons. Moreover, Ceylon would find India willing to purchase soap. Towards the end of December the copra and coconut oil market of Ceylon was freed of control and though exports are still subject to licence there is no reason to believe that there will be any price conditions.

During 1948 Ceylon sent abroad 75,730 tons of coconut oil and 54,461 tons of copra with the British Ministry of Food paying, in 1949, £55 a ton (duty paid) for copra under contract. Only when the contract conditions had been discharged have the authorities been able to sell in the free market. Thus, for 1948 and 1949 free market conditions have not prevailed in copra until about the fourth quarter of the year. The world price for sterling copra at the time this relaxation was announced was around £80 a ton and the Ceylon Government seized the opportunity at once to raise the export duties. As a result, producers will no longer receive Government cover for a minimum price although they will receive substantially more at once and will continue to do so even if world prices fall below their present level.

The immediate effect of the ending of the United Kingdom-Ceylon copra agreement was to send the price up to Rs. 185 per 560lb. (one candy). Millers on the island refused to buy at such a price and plant became idle; several dessicated coconut mills also ceased operations. As a consequence the Government placed an embargo upon export licences for copra and coconuts in order to safeguard supplies for the domestic industry. Naturally, this was not well received by the local producers who declared it "grossly unfair" to expect them to "subsidise the milling industry."

Some idea of the extensive nature of Indonesian copra production can be gathered from the accompanying statistics. In addition to the large production from the native Indonesian plantations, there is also a small output from the estates developed with European capital though this represents but a very small percentage of the exported copra. Financial rewards from estate cultivation have not been particularly favourable for many years and generally speaking the European planter has found it more profitable to cultivate the oil palm rather than the coconut palm. A big factor in this is the seven-year period which must elapse before the latter yields a crop.

This slow development of coconut estates is, however, chiefly due to the fact that copra is a mass product where the quality element is of hardly any importance. Copra of excellence is produced only in a few areas of the world;

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Ceylon, the Maldive Islands, parts of the Indian Union, and the Philippines. Elsewhere, a considerable portion of the output is wet, mouldy, discoloured, soft, insect-ridden, or coated with slime. Ceylon's copra is undoubtedly the best and the Dominion's oil is superior to the oils of most other producing countries. Again, the dessicated coconut coming from Ceylon has been authoritatively counted superior in quality to the Philippine product.

The Philippine Islands are, in fact, the main world supplier of copra. Production here is tied to the requirements of the United States and the Philipinos have had until recently to operate under the relatively low price domestic oils and fats influence of the States. That matters have somewhat changed in this connection is partly due to storm damage in the Islands and partly to the growing exchange difficulties which have compelled the Philippine Government to introduce exchange control.

The largest yield of nuts comes after 15 years and provided the tree is maintained in good condition, an adequate production might be kept going for dozens of years. Cost of production in Malaya has lately been calculated at 13

to 15 Straits dollars a picul and despite the fact that the manufacture of palm oil requires expensive equipment and fairly large-scale operations to be economic, a number of new elements are coming into the market. Rubber estates, for example, are developing copra cultivation on spare land or land where the Japanese cut out rubber.

Annual production per tree varies widely. Those growing under poor conditions, or given insufficient skilled attention, may yield only 20 nuts, at the other end of the scale a tree may give 150. The average in the case of the large variety of nut is around 50. As a rule in Indonesia the native product is bought up by Chinese traders in the interior who, in turn, sell it to export houses in the main coastal towns.

Malayan copra prices have lately been moving at high levels, part of the reason being the devaluation of sterling. Immediately prior to devaluation the price was about 20 Straits dollars a picul and in December it had gone to 30 Straits dollars for the loose product. The above mentioned conditions of successful growing militate against the possibilities of expanding the Malayan copra crop.

EXPORTS OF COPRA FROM INDONESIA

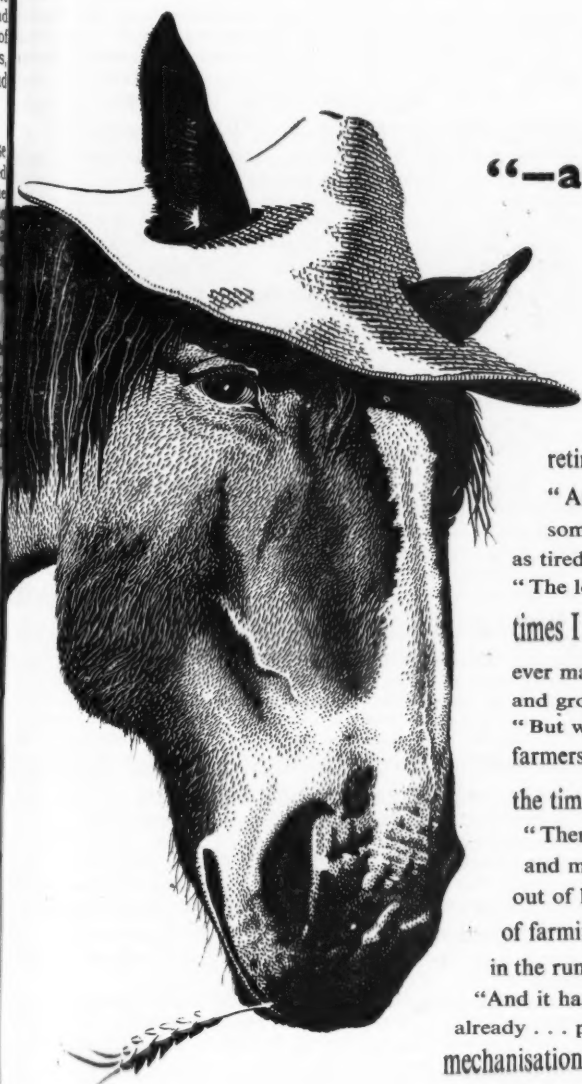
January-June (inc.), 1949

Country of Destination	Weight in Kilos (in thousands)	Value in Guilders
<i>From Java and Madoera:</i>		
Netherlands	2,074	1,266
Total	2,074	1,266
<i>From Sumatra:</i>		
Singapore	4,414	2,457
Total	4,430	2,467
<i>From Borneo:</i>		
	nil	nil
<i>From East Indonesia (including New Guinea):</i>		
Netherlands	105,968	56,667
U.K.	14,731	7,702
Germany	8,548	4,356
Belgium & Luxemburg	4,064	1,903
Czechoslovakia	2,438	1,329
Switzerland	1,016	483
Poland	508	287
Canada	3,709	1,503
U.S.A.	13,310	5,109
South Africa	2,540	1,230
Singapore	2,134	915
Japan	7,112	4,119
Total	166,080	85,609

EXPORTS OF COPRA CAKES FROM INDONESIA

January-June (inc.), 1949

Country of Destination	Weight in Kilos (in thousands)	Value in Guilders
<i>From Java and Madoera:</i>		
Netherlands	700	98
Denmark	300	31
Penang	197	22
Singapore	7,079	864
Unknown	51	7
Total	8,416	1,037
<i>From Sumatra:</i>		
Singapore	347	37
Total	347	37
<i>From Borneo:</i>		
Singapore	71	9
Total	71	9
<i>From East Indonesia (including New Guinea):</i>		
Netherlands	156	22
Singapore	1,059	135
Total	1,215	157



“—and about time, too!”

“The way things were going, I never thought it would happen. But it did — I’ve actually been

retired from farm work.

“And about time, too! I was never meant to drag some farmer along behind a plough. Poor fellow, he was as tired as I was at the end of a day in the fields.

“The long hours and hard work — not to mention the times I went lame! — might have made some sense if we’d ever managed to do more than just scratch the surface and grow a little food.

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ECONOMIC PUBLICATIONS

Location of Industries in India by TULSI RAM SHARMA
(*Hind Kitabs, Bombay, Rs. 10.8.*)

The first thing to bear in mind when evaluating this most carefully documented work is that it was conceived and largely compiled before the partition of the sub-continent. This would be serious enough even given a close routine of co-operation between the two parties; under the existing circumstances of virtual economic warfare, however, it vitiates several aspects of the author's thesis (especially the section devoted to supplies of electricity). The impression left, though, following a careful reading, is that the book will long remain as a kind of standard work.

The crux of Professor Sharma's thesis is the imperative need for a strong central planning authority able to exercise an ultimate power over the constituent provinces. In an important paragraph of his foreword Radhakamal Mukerjee speaks to this necessity in the following fashion:

"If India becomes a first class industrial power in Asia the core of this development will be represented by the mineral region covering parts of Bengal, Bihar and the Central Provinces in which the heavy engineering, mechanic, machine tool and chemical industries will be located. But this would introduce planned control and co-ordination of the basic industries by a strong Centre."

Accepting as a first principle that free enterprise, *laissez faire* and the Smithian theory of the global division of labour is now irrelevant, and that all planning in the post-partition Union must perforce be on regional lines, Professor Sharma examines the six major industries (cotton, wool, jute, iron and steel, sugar and leather) and indicates how successful long-term operations may be carried through. The problems set by skilled and mining labour scarcities, the state of communications and foreign competition are analysed and accompanied by graphs and maps. Of special interest is the chapter dealing with the prospects of rural industrialisation and it is worth noting that Professor Sharma cites the pre-war success of Japan in breaking down and intensively standardising the manufacture of bicycles.

A Study of Economic Plans for India by PROF. D. S. NAG
(*Hind Kitabs, Bombay, Rs. 6.8.*)

In a sense, Professor Nag takes up the story of economic planning in the sub-continent where, in the main, important aspects of Professor Sharma's work come to an end. Both books gain immeasurably by being read in conjunction. For Professor Nag not only, and for the first time, surveys the history of economic planning in the sub-continent, but he also subjects to an astonishingly concise and detailed criticism the most significant of the various schemes which have been thrust forward since the earliest attempt of the National Planning Committee of the Indian National Congress in 1938.

Thus, he takes in the work of the National Planning Committee, the so-called "Bombay Plan" (which aimed at doubling the agricultural output and boosting that of industry by 500 per cent), the war-time Government of India's plan for reconstruction (nicely dubbed "Reconstruction Plans of the Bureaucracy"), the "People's Plan" (got together by the Post-War Reconstruction Committee

of the Indian Federation of Labour and calling, among much else, for the nationalisation of land and the forcible scaling down of rural indebtedness) and S. N. Agarwal's "Gandhian Plan" which is far from widely known in the West.

Professor Nag observes that this latter plan relies entirely upon internal funds: "It neglects altogether external resources like sterling balances, favourable trade balances and foreign borrowings." That is, indeed, quite a lot to leave out of account as, for some years to come, the Indian Union will need foreign credit for financing capital goods for defence purposes, key and heavy industries which, according to the "Gandhian Plan," writes Professor Nag, "shall by no means be neglected in a free India."

HOWARD FOX

Asia's Trade by B. G. GHATE (*Indian Council of World Affairs. London: Geoffrey Cumberlege, Oxford University Press, 12s. 6d.*)

It is a matter for rather academic speculation whether some of the more important conclusions of this work appeared less idealistic when the book was completed in mid-1947 than they do today. However, they merit study because they proceed from what is largely a strictly factual analysis of Asia's trade by an Asiatic. More important, the author has not been content merely to assemble facts and figures, but has throughout kept clearly in sight the ultimate purpose of a study of this kind—to show how it is linked to the overall problem of raising the standard of living of Asia's millions.

One of the author's principal suggestions is for the establishment of an Intra-Asian Commodity Corporation "for the orderly production and distribution of Asia's raw materials." The desirability of such an organisation—presumably functioning as a part of the United Nations Organisation—is beyond dispute. This, however, is a very long way off and a great deal is destined to happen in the internal affairs of the various Asian countries before they form something like a United Front to tackle the great problem of dovetailing Asia into the final pattern of world trade.

Another suggestion given a good deal of emphasis and repetition by the author rather appears to lose sight of the realities of existing relations between Asia and the other countries of the world interested in the area. Mr. Ghate makes a strong plea for a "parallel convention to the 'equal access to raw materials' clause of the Atlantic Charter by which the highly industrialised countries are bound to grant equality of access to their capital goods to the backward countries." This, he makes clear, is to prevent a situation in which a number of Asian countries might indulge in competitive bidding for equipment in short supply.

If one considers the two most important undeveloped countries of Asia—China and India—one sees immediately the present impossibility of close co-operation between them in order to prevent their exploitation by some such country as the U.S. which is in a position to supply the vast quantities of capital equipment they need. America is today simultaneously taking active steps to prevent the flow of goods to China and speed up what she regards as essential

development for India. It is important, too, not to lose sight of the fact that the most serious resulting danger to India is not the risk of being "overcharged," but the danger that the price of foreign assistance might take the form of undue American influence on the shaping of India's internal policy.

Even though they are for the most part no more recent than 1942, the statistics given in the book are still a valuable guide and serve to bring home very forcibly the present and enormously greater potential importance of Asia in the trade of the world. In this connection the author gives what, it is to be hoped, will prove a timely reminder to the governments of the various Asian countries. So far, he points out, these countries have largely depended for commercial intelligence regarding Asia's raw materials, trade, etc., on foreign publications and reports. The western student will eagerly await the early remedying of this situation at least in such countries as India, China, Pakistan, Ceylon and Indonesia.

JOHN ERICKSON.

The Economic Situation of Japan (Institute of World Economy, Tokyo.)

Rumours of a Japanese Peace Treaty, the aggravation of economic depression in Japan, and the changing relations in the East due to the Communist victories in China, cause thinking people to consider what the future holds for this great Asian country after four years of American occupation. Important background material on the economic situation in Japan has been published in the form of a study by the Institute of World Economy of Tokio. *The Economic Situation of Japan* gives a bird's-eye view of economic trends, combined with a report to the American Committee on Foreign Affairs by an American observer. The conclusions of the latter are weak and indecisive, but the former gives enough hard facts to indicate that S.C.A.P. policy in Japan is running into snags which may one day bring the occupation to an end with disastrous results both for the Japanese and the occupying forces.

It is already known that the recession is affecting most countries to a greater or lesser degree. In Japan its effect is more marked than anywhere else. Exports have dropped, goods are accumulating in warehouses, the cost of living is rising, and the temporary stability of the immediate post-war period is seriously threatened.

S.C.A.P. policy has been to direct Japan's exports away from their nearest traditional and best market—China—and towards areas where they compete violently with the production of the industrialised West. This, which the study fails to note, is the key to Japan's future. China, since the Communist victories, is a vast market both for consumer and capital goods, and also a source of raw material and food for Japan. It is noticeable that Japanese businessmen are well aware of this fact, and are becoming restive under the guiding reins of S.C.A.P. tutelage.

The failure of export policy is equalled by a progressive deterioration and depletion of natural wealth and investments. For years past Japan has been living on her fat—and the time is rapidly approaching when there will be no more fat to live on. The exhaustion of forests is leading to a cumulative increase in soil erosion, flood damage, and a shortage of timber. Replacement of houses

is not keeping up with deterioration, and repair and replacement of transport and communications do not keep level with wear-and-tear. The same situation is to be found in industry. Small and medium firms, unable to compete with monopolies, are faced with bankruptcy.

In agriculture the relative stability which followed the end of the war has given place to a decline. While the price of agricultural produce remains stagnant, that of manufactured goods rises, and taxes on the farming population increases. The peasant household which paid 13 per cent of its income in taxes in 1945, now pays more than 22 per cent.

Austerity, in fact, has reached a new low level. The average family is consuming 46 per cent less than it did in 1934-36. The percentage of income spent on food, always a significant factor, has risen from 35 per cent before the war to 65 now—indicative of the decline in living standards.

"The Japanese economy" concludes the Report, "is in an extremely abnormal and unsound state." This is a pronouncement which is amply proved by the Report even if it does not attempt to provide a solution.

A solution there undoubtedly is—although not one favoured by the present rulers of Japan. Japan has a part to play—in collaboration with New China—in the peaceful and democratic reconstruction of Asia. To prevent the natural association of these two countries in the interests of United States's foreign policy will only help to further the political and economic chaos at present characteristic of the Far East.

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ECONOMIC NOTES

INDONESIAN EXPORTS

Provisional figures issued in Jakarta, give Indonesian exports for December last as 713,993 tons to the value of 169,2 million guilders. The total for 1949 is calculated (compared with 1948) at 7,637,297 t (5,185,315 t) to the value of hfl. 1,499 m (hfl. 1,040 m). Oil exports have increased from 3,849,497 t at hfl. 260 m in 1948, to 5,689,607 t at hfl. 409 m in 1949.

AUSTRALIAN LOAN TO BURMA

The Australian Government have granted a loan of £500,000 from their London balances to the Government of Burma in order to help the latter to overcome their present acute financial difficulties and, in particular, to enable them to maintain the level of rice exports to neighbouring countries.

JAPANESE IMPORTS

The Tokyo Ministry of International Trade and Industry announced on February 24th, that import contracts during 1949 had totalled \$854 million, while actual imports had amounted to 764 million dollars. Foodstuffs accounted for 55 per cent of the total contracts, and textile and raw materials another 25 per cent.

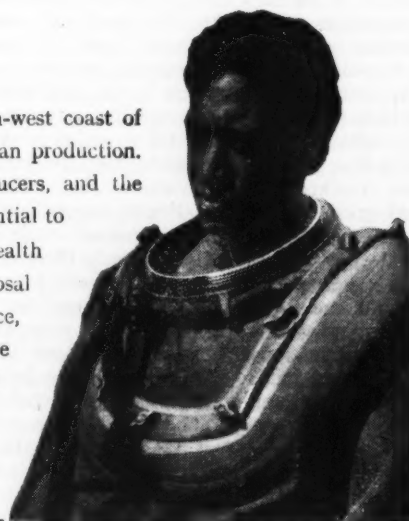
THAILAND RICE SURPLUS

During 1949 a total of 1,215,853 tons of rice were exported by Thailand. The rice trade has now been released by the Government into private hands, and most of the available permits have been for rice exports to Japan which is to purchase about 300,000 tons during the coming year. While the existence of a large export surplus of rice for 1950 suggests that Thailand should enjoy a good volume of overseas trade during the coming year, the future pattern of trade is not clear. A greater proportion of Japanese goods can be expected in the market and at the same time, Japan is proposing to take more than her traditional share of Thailand's exports.

Merchants are concerned at the uncertainty of the tin market in New York and London, the possibility of lower prices for rubber, and the diminution of American demand for the country's sundry produce. The supply of dollars on the Bangkok free exchange market is dependent less on direct export of Thai goods to America than on general availability of dollars in the whole of the Far East, but with the cessation of United States aid to China and the reduced flow of exports from China, dollars may well become scarcer than ever in the region as a whole just at the time when Thailand's own earnings of dollars are uncertain. Should this happen, both United Kingdom and American manufacturers may lose some of their Thailand export trade to competitors from Japan, but in general it may provide a favourable opportunity for United Kingdom exports. At the beginning of the month, Bangkok quoted the following exchange rates for the tical: £1=53.50 ticals; \$1=23.25 ticals; Hong Kong \$1=3.60 ticals; Straits \$1=6.72 ticals; Indian R.1=4.12 ticals; one tical weight of gold bars for 479 ticals, and one tical weight of gold for 500.28 ticals.

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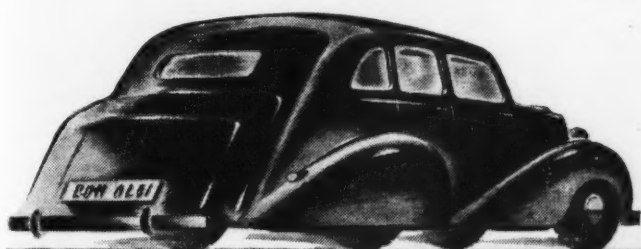


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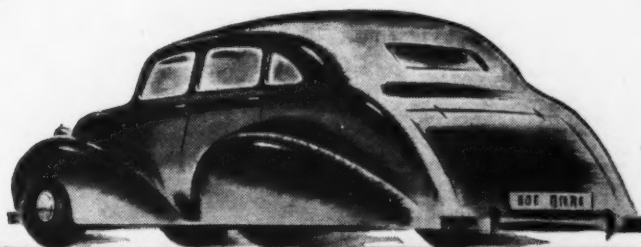
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LEFT

IN SOME COUNTRIES THEY DRIVE

RIGHT



BUT THE WORLD OVER THEY

DRIVE ON

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PHILIPPINES SAVE DOLLARS

The Philippines Secretary of Commerce, Mr. Balmaceda, has initiated a plan to develop and expand local industries and has urged that all government contracts should give preference to locally-made materials as substitutes for foreign materials which have been placed under import control. This policy is being explained as a method of saving dollars while it is expected to give an impetus to dollar-producing industries.

HONG KONG—CHINA TRADE

Since the beginning of the Blockade on June 26th, 1949, more than 500,000 gross tons of shipping has left Hong Kong for trade with the People's Government. Of this total, approximately 240,000 tons have been conveyed in British shipping, followed by Soviet-owned ships with a figure in excess of 125,000 tons. 11 British ships have broken the Shanghai Blockade, delivering a total cargo figure of approximately 14,000 tons; 5 American ships have delivered about 40,000 tons. Since mid-December, 1949, when the British ship s.s. *Elsie Moller* sailed through to Shanghai, no ship has successfully entered into that

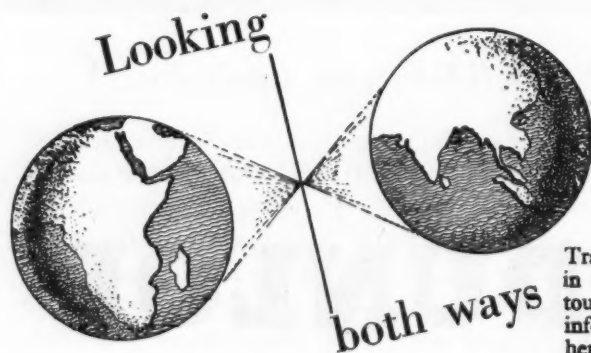
port. At least four vessels are known to have returned from the Yangtze mouth complete with their Shanghai bound cargoes, having failed to enter that port and having depleted themselves of sufficient provisions to continue to another North China port. More than 10,000 tons of undelivered cargo is estimated to have been returned to the Colony in this way. During the first five months of the Blockade the most popular ports were Tientsin, and Tsingtao since these, except by mines, are difficult to blockade in view of distance involved and the insufficient numbers of the Nationalist Navy. They have handled more than 70 per cent of all cargo leaving Hong Kong for China. A marked feature since December, 1949, has been the coming into prominence of the South China port of Swatow and four out of every ten ships leaving the Colony for the China trade are understood to have gone there. Russian ships, although usually stopping at Tientsin or Tsingtao to discharge certain cargo, have continued thereafter to the Russian controlled ports of Dairen, Chinkampo and Suishan.

All cargoes consist of high priced

materials. While an estimate of the total value sent during the past month is only approximate, it is thought to be US\$200 million.

U.S. KOREA-FORMOSA AID BILL

The U.S. House of Representatives has passed a Bill authorising U.S. economic assistance to the Republic of Korea and the Chinese Nationalist Government now on Formosa. The actual appropriation of funds will be handled in separate legislation, but the authorising measure provides for an advance of 30 million dollars. By its action on February 9th, the House in effect reversed its previous vote a few weeks ago rejecting a Bill to authorise assistance to Korea alone. The measure as now approved by the House would permit 60 million dollars to be appropriated for Korea, extending the current programme from its scheduled expiration date, February 15th to June 30th. These funds would be in addition to another 60 million dollars already been spent this fiscal year. Thus, the total U.S. aid for the current 1949-50 fiscal year would be 120 million dollars.



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William Nicholson

turned to scientific research after a commercial career with the East India Company, and made the historic discovery that water could be decomposed by passing an electric current through it. This is an example of electrolysis which is the foundation of many important industrial and scientific operations. Working in company with another English chemist, Carlisle, in 1800, Nicholson constructed an

electric battery (known at that time as a "Voltaic Pile"), from thirty-six half-crowns and a number of zinc discs and pieces of pasteboard. Though the current produced by this crude apparatus was so minute that only a few thimblefuls of gas were collected over a period of thirteen hours, Nicholson showed not only that water could be electrolysed, but that the two gases of which it is composed appear at different places, the oxygen being evolved where the electric current enters the water and hydrogen where it leaves.

Nicholson, who was born in London in 1753, made many other scientific discoveries between his return from India in 1786 and his death in 1815. He invented a hydrometer, took out patents for textile printing machinery, planned and carried out a scheme for the water supply to Portsmouth. He was a scientific writer of great contemporary eminence and founded and, until his death, edited the "Journal of Natural Philosophy". But the electrolysis of water, a fundamental discovery of very great importance, remains this Englishman's real contribution to the world's total of scientific knowledge.



